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ABSTRACT

This workbook is a job search process kit for those over the age of 50. The kit is in honor of all age-50-and-over workers who are determined and dedicated to continuing an active, productive life. Its aim is to help older workers with the what and how of finding a job, and specifically, finding an appropriate mid-life or retirement job. The exercises it contains are simple to follow and can be used over and over in the job search. Chapters are included on maturing and aging, creating a personal data bank, resumes, interviewing basics, job search hints, the older worker and the computer, and cyber job hunting. (GCP)

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ED 471 451

The Job Search Kit

For Those

50 and Over

by Marilyn Tellez, M.A.

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Introduction

This is the third revision of *DOITNOW! THE JOB SEARCH KIT FOR THOSE 50 AND OVER.*

Thanks to David Kessler, co-author of the first edition. Much of his material on résumés has been incorporated in this new edition.

My advisory group was a source of ideas, fun and help. Madelyn Carlson was always there with support and enthusiasm. Nanette Lee with her computer skills made the *DOITNOW!* Web page a reality. She made a creative contribution, which I could not duplicate. Irvin "Monk" Sonker, and his vocational education students typed and copied the text onto disks to save for the next edition. Their names are: Maria Abundiz, Edith Barajas, and Nicole Lyons. Third edition students who have made revisions are Julio Amaya and Michael Osborn.

John Strong was impressive with his editing and writing skills. He wrote two chapters: *You and the Computer*, and *Cyber Job Hunting*.

I extend my gratitude to all of you who were involved in this project. It could not have happened without their help and kindness.

Sincerely,

Marilyn J. Tellez

Marilyn J. Tellez, M.A.
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Third Edition, Revised 2002

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION i

MATURING AND AGING 1

YOUR PERSONAL DATA BANK 17

RESUMES 20

INTERVIEWING BASICS 46

JOB SEARCH HINTS 56

YOU AND THE COMPUTER 77

CYBER JOB HUNTING 83

REFERENCES 86

ORDER FORM 87

Maturity and Aging

The following thoughts about maturity and aging are the random musings of the authors about this process. We hope that you find something worthwhile to think about.

Your purpose in life is to find meaning in what you do, whether that is for pay or not. Finding meaning and doing what you do with passion is something that wise philosophers have taught through the ages. Please find yours whether your circumstances are the best, in the middle or poor. Recovering a sense of why you are on this earth is a key not only to successful aging, but to your job search as well.

Along with a purpose and goals, it is important to have a sense of community with others. If you have limited resources or a disability, it is not only important but vital that you reach out, and continue to do so, to others.

Try to find a way to reach out to someone new, especially the young, on a daily basis. That can help you deal with a sense of uselessness, apathy, and loss that is often negatively associated with aging.

Thankfulness is associated with finding a job. By enlarging your sense of what you have that is worthwhile, the process will enable you to find more of what you want and may lack. Try to be thankful for the small things as well as the big!

If you say that the world does not want you and that you are too old, or whatever other excuses occur to you, please remember that you are absolutely unique. Only one employer needs to want you for you to feel validated.

It is important to continue to learn new things as you age. One wrong-headed idea some people have about mature workers is that they are inflexible and too hard to train. Prove that you are the exception by continual learning. Learning does not have to be of the formal, sitting-in-class type. Learning and picking up new skills can be done just with a book! Or ask to apprentice yourself to someone for free to learn what you want to learn.

If you take the initiative to learn you will also protect yourself from many of the "workquakes" that have hit the job market recently. Being associated with one employer for a lifetime is no longer the rule. YOU, and YOU alone, are responsible for continuing to improve your skills. Start with your interests and the telephone. You'll be surprised at what you can discover.

A chapter on education and training has purposely been left out of DO IT NOW! in order to emphasize the mechanics of the job search.

To us, education in the formal sense, means to enroll, attend, and pay for classes. New knowledge and skills are the end result.

Training is associated with acquiring specific, functional skills.

You, as mature workers, need to evaluate whether you need additional training or education which helps you become more employable. As you participate in these activities, the questions you will have to ask yourself are based on how and where you can use the new knowledge and skills.

If an inner voice tells you that you are too old to learn, or that money is in short supply, find out if there are ways to get support in an educational setting. Ask about how to find monies too.

If your motives for extended learning are based on leisure and pleasure, the new skills and knowledges are important for a mature person to use in living a fuller life. Any of those learnings can be used as building blocks for a new career at any age.

Hopefully, you will have incorporated formal or informal education and training throughout your life.

The fear of doing something new or taking risks is negatively associated with aging. People used to say that someone was just "set in their ways", so no change was possible. But change is all around us. You can learn to anticipate and enjoy it!

Playfulness is an asset for all mature workers. Do you play, by yourself and with others? What gives you a sense of fun? If you plan for playfulness during the aging process, you will be healthier and more functional. Exercise is fun, clears the mind and builds resistance to breakdown of body and mind. Exercise and fun things are a part of a useful life at any age.

Are you contented? Have you resolved the important differences with people in your past? Is there someone with whom you need to be at peace? Resolving these difficulties is extremely important to the job hunt and to living a freer life. Get clear of the anger a past employer may have caused you. Anger will only eat away at the host -- you! For help in closing off your conflicts, see a minister, counselor, or a trusted friend. Pray if you are religious. Whatever you do to find solace, use the new-found peace and freedom to get on with your life.

Don't try to discard **all** of your past as it is part of your present and future. The past, regardless of how difficult, has in it some of the building blocks of your present and future. Examine your past. Write your **autobiography** to search further for your special talents and life purpose.

Finally think of life as an adventure. You climb the mountains, sail the seas, and make your destiny. If you are religious, then you know what your destiny is.

PART A
Skills

Most people are confused about skills. Many think they have no skills. In easy terms, skills are defined as what you can do and when you can do it. Some skills are so basic that many people do not think of them as skills. Others have become automatic. If you drive a car, you use many **functional skills** which include judging distances, checking speed, turning the steering wheel, anticipating corners and other drivers, etc. The same is true for whatever you do. Writing a grocery list requires basic **functional** skills.

The list of skills goes on to include more involved **work content skills**, meaning what you have done to accomplish something. If Uncle Joe calls you to talk out a problem and you help him find a solution to his problem, that is a **work content skill** and a skill in dealing with people and their problems. If you have operated machinery of any kind, including irons, saws or vacuum cleaners, you have a skill working with things. And, if you can fix or repair any of these things, that skill can be transferred to a work area.

One easy way to find out more about yourself and your skills is to jot down the actual happenings of your average day. What have you done today? If all you have done is watch television, for example, you have had to decide what to watch and how to run the TV set. The choice of what to watch is about your **values**, not your skills.

Employers cherish, want and need the skills of managing one's self on the job. These **adaptive skills** contribute to good worker attitudes and traits. They are skills most mature workers have in abundance. Many life experiences have taught mature workers to adapt. A list of common adaptive skills are listed on page 12.

Some people have difficulty in translating **work content skills** into job objectives. A homemaker, for example, uses many managerial skills. There are meals to prepare, clothing to mend, juggling of different schedules and appointments to make. These are **work content skills**.

But a person is not a role nor a job title. So **work content skills** may be bound up in your mind as to what **role** you assumed in a job, whether in the home or at work. You are not just a homemaker, nor a secretary, nor a carpenter, or anything else in life you are assumed to be at work. **You are a sum of all the skills you have used at home, work, or leisure.**

Use this page to write which group of skills you would most like to use in your job search. The three groups are: **adaptive skills**, **functional/transferable skills**, and **work content skills**. You need not be specific. Just decide which group of skills is most meaningful for you.

"Nothing is a waste of time if you use the experience wisely."

- Rodin

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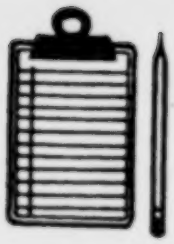

Now choose an achievement from your youth that made you proud. Describe what it was, how you did it and the outcome. This is the place to brag. Don't be shy. You are an important person.

Next choose an achievement from your younger adulthood. Describe it, how you did it and the outcome. Spelling and grammar don't count here. This part of the kit is for you to know yourself better. Leisure pursuits count too; don't eliminate them.

What achievement or goal have you completed recently? Small tasks and leisure time activities count. These accomplishments are the building blocks for your next job.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

"If you can't get a compliment from any other, pay yourself one."

- Mark Twain

Skills (continued)

Now that you have listed three accomplishments of which you are most proud, look at the following list of skill verbs. Circle THE TEN which are your best and most enjoyed skills. You do have these skills even though you may be afraid that they are not good enough. Of course they are!

If you cannot find ten which are both your BEST AND THE MOST ENJOYED, feel free to make up <u>two lists</u> of the <u>ten best</u>, then <u>ten which were the most enjoyed</u>. If you do not understand any of these verbs, there is a strong presumption that you do not have the skill which corresponds to the verb. Don't punish yourself for words you do not know. Circle those you ordinarily use.

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achieved
acted
adapted
addressed
administered
advised
analyzed
anticipated
arbitrated
ascertained
assembled
assessed
attained
audited
arranged
budgeted
built
calculated
charted
checked
classified
coached
collected
communicated
influenced
informed
initiated
innovated
inspected
inspired
installed
instituted
instructed
integrated
interpreted
interviewed
invented
inventoried
investigated
judged
kept
lectured
learned
listened

compiled
completed
composed
computed
conceptualized
conducted
consolidated
constructed
conserved
controlled
coordinated
copied
counseled
created
decided
defined
delivered
designed
detailed
detected
determined
developed
devised
diagnosed
problem-solved
processed
produced
programmed
projected
promoted
proof-read
protected
provided
publicized
purchased
questioned
raised
read
realized
reasoned
received
reconciled
recommended
recruited

directed
discovered
dispensed
displaced
disproved
dissected
distributed
diverted
dramatized
drew
drove
dug
edited
eliminated
empathized
enforced
established
estimated
evaluated
examined
explained
expanded
experimented
expressed
symbolized
synergized
synthesized
systematized
talked
taught
team-built
tended
tested & proved
told
took
took instructions
trained
transcribed
translated
treated
traveled
troubleshot
lead
lifted

extracted
filed
financed
fixed
followed
formulated
founded
gathered
gave
generated
got
guided
had responsibility for
handled
headed
helped
hypothesized
identified
illustrated
imagined
implemented
improved
improvised
increased
tutored
typed
umpired
understood
understudied
undertook
unified
united
upgraded
used
utilized
washed
weighed
worded
wrote
wrought
verbalized
recorded
reduced
rehabilitated

made
managed
mediated
mentored
modeled
motivated
observed
offered
ordered
organized
oversaw
perceived
persuaded
piloted
played
prepared
presented
printed
referred
related
rendered
reported
researched
responded
retrieved
sang
selected
separated
served
set-up
shaped
showed
sold
sorted
studied
logged
maintained
manipulated
memorized
met
monitored
navigated
obtained
operated
organized
originated
painted
performed
photographed
planned
predicted
prescribed
remembered
repaired
represented
resolved
restored
risked
scheduled
sensed
served
set
sewed
shared
sketched
solved
spoke
summarized
supplied
supervised

"If one advances confidently in the directions of his/her dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he/she has imagined, he/she will meet with a success unexpected in common hours."

- Henry David Thoreau

To continue, use the space on the following two pages, (or use separate paper), to construct a short paragraph about an **imaginary job** that uses the skill words you feel were your best and the most enjoyed. (You might have 10-20 short paragraphs that could show you about jobs you could investigate.) Refer to pages 7 and 8 for skill verbs you used in your achievement list.

Best Verbs	**Most Enjoyed Verbs**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Skills from Word List

As an experiment, look in the newspaper and circle advertised jobs which might use your skills. List them on page 10. Ask friends, relatives, and other contacts about jobs they might know which use the skills you have listed in your job paragraphs. Other people might be able to help you in thinking of jobs you may have missed. After talking to others, jot down more job paragraphs on the next page.

You are now finding out more about yourself and your future job goals by describing what you have done. The **verb lists, achievements** and **job paragraphs** are to be used in your résumé. Most of all, they are **crucial** in deciding on a job objective.

JOBS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

❶ _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

❷ _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

❸ _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

❹ _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

ADVERTISED JOBS THAT FIT YOU

❶

❷

❸

❹

On this page, check the **adaptive skills** that most apply to you as mature worker:

_ Work well as a team player

_ Self-motivated

_ Reliable

_ Work well under stress or pressure

_ Financial planning and management skills

_ Work well independent of supervision

_ Troubleshooting / problem resolution skills

_ Ability to clarify and identify problem areas

_ Ability to schedule / manage time

_ Tolerance for work requiring repetition

_ Leader; bring people together to meet goals

_ Strong number / math / statistical skills

_ Good decision-making skills

_ Complete projects on time / within budget

_ Strong organizational skills

_ Committed to learning as a life-long process

_Strong decision making skills

_Innovative; generate ideas with commercial / profit possibilities

_ Committed to personal growth

_ Follow through on assigned tasks

_ Provide support services to others

_ Regularly get things done ahead of time

_ Memory; attention to detail

_Readily makes contacts

_ Ability to motivate others

_Able to take the initiative

_ Flexible in changing situations

_ Planning & development skills

_ Strong public relations skills

_Creative, innovative

_ Quick learning

_ Detail oriented

_ Level headed

_Strong written communication skills

_Strong verbal communication skills

Job Families

Now is the time to consider that jobs consist of three families: **data, people, things**. How much of a day would you spend on one of these families? Example: 1/2 day with people, 1/4 with data, 1/4 with things. Make notes about how you would like to spend your day.

D _____

A _____

T _____

A _____

P _____

E _____

O _____

P _____

L _____

E _____

T _____

H _____

I _____

N _____

G _____

S _____

"You are only what you are when no one is looking."

- Robert C. Edwards

Self Review

WHAT IF all of your inward looking exercises begin to make you feel tired and depressed?

Try these tactics to improve your self-esteem and get you moving.

- **TALK** over your situation with relatives, friends, a religious advisor, or anyone who loves you and will listen. Job hunting is a lonely process. It is stressful to do alone.

- **GO TO** your local state employment service. They have services available for you. ASK FOR THEM.

- **WRITE** anyone on your holiday card list that you are job hunting, even if that person lives many miles away. You never know who they might know in your neighborhood. They might know others elsewhere to give you leads and names.

- **DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR SELF-EVALUATION. PLEASE KNOW THAT THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU TO GIVE OF YOURSELF, AND FIND A JOB THAT VALUES YOU.**

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"When you cannot make up your mind which of two evenly balanced courses of action you should take - choose the bolder."

- W J Slim

Continued Self Review

If you won the lottery or had received a large sum of money, how would you spend it? Dare to dream about all of the things you want to have or give to others.

The things you wrote about are an expression of your **values**. Use them in your job search. Also decide what the world needs from you. **Write them out.**

Spelling and grammar don't count here. This is a way of finding out more about yourself when no one is looking. (Spelling and grammar count **a lot** on resumes and applications)..

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Now that your have begun to clarify your job goals, values, wants and needs, fill out a personal data bank sheet and model application. These exercises will give you a model of what to look for next.

> *"Positive anything is better than negative nothing."*
>
> - Elbert Hubbard

Filling Out Applications and Your Own Personal Data Bank

It is wise to carry along your own data sheet wherever you go. That sheet should include your Social Security number, address, telephone number, names of dependents, people to call in an emergency, etc. This sheet is preliminary to the other information carried along with you on your personal application blank.

By keeping your data bank sheet and a filled out model application blank with you, it will prevent mistakes and avoid nervousness about what you may have forgotten. You will be more accurate with the application blank.

Neatness, spelling, and handwriting are important on an application blank. This is often the first impression you create with an employer. The application can be used by the employer as a "screening out" or "screening in" device. If you are asked to fill it in at the employer's office and cannot take it home with you to be filled out privately, please print.

If application sections are not clear, ask for clarification. Leave no section blank. Some applications are filed horizontally. Check for a place to be filled out with your name on that side. Some employers see this as a reason to screen you out.

Part B will address résumés, interviewing, cover letters and **real** job case histories. When you begin to prepare your résumé, use your descriptions from your achievement paragraphs, your skill verbs, and imaginary jobs paragraphs as a base for your job objective.

"The successful people are the ones who can think up things for the rest of the world to keep busy at."

- Don Marquis

Part B

Your Personal Data Bank and Model Application

The following form is designed to supply you with the necessary information about yourself as you work on your job hunting.

Fill it in as a permanent record to refer to when filling out applications. This way you will not have to gather up pieces of paper. You will have a record.

Full Name _____

Address _____

_____

Phone Number _____

Social Security # _____

Emergency Contact _____

Now that the essential information about you is written in your own personal data sheet, try out this sample application form. Fill it in for practice. **It must be neat**. If handwritten, be sure that your printing is easy to read. This is the first form some employers see. **It must be legible**. If you are allowed to fill out an application at an employer's place of business, use your personal data sheet form as a guide.

It is best not to include any experience more than ten years old. You can say you are a high school graduate without including the dates. If you did not graduate, it is acceptable to say you attended high school without revealing your lack of a diploma. This may sound a little sneaky. It is a way to help an employer **not to discount your application because of age.**

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SAMPLE APPLICATION FORM

1.

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Mailing Address: _____
(Street Address or P.O. Box)

_____
(City) (State) (Zip Code)

2. Position Applied For:

3. Home Phone _____
Office Phone _____
Message Phone _____

4. Date of Birth (Note: " Please indicate only if the position announcement contains an age limitation.")

5. EDUCATION: Please be complete to allow an accurate appraisal of your qualifications.

Circle highest school grade completed: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Do you have a GED certificate? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name and location of Colleges or Universities attended:	From:	To:	Major:	Units:	Sem.	Qtr.	Degree

Graduate study: Vocational, business, trade, or correspondence schools:	From:	To:	Field:	Subject:	Degree(s)	Certificate ?

6. Languages spoken or written other than English _____ ☐ Spoken ☐ Written ☐ Fluent ☐ Good ☐ Fair

7. Do you possess any of the following licenses if needed for specific jobs?
- ☐ Valid Calif. Driver's License. No _____ Class _____
- ☐ Valid Calif. L.V.N. License. No. _____
- ☐ Valid Calif. R.N. License. No. _____
- ☐ Other (Explain) _____

8. List any relatives employed by the County of Stanislaus
_____
Name Department

9. Check each type of work you will accept: Permanent ☐ Temporary ☐ Night ☐ Weekend ☐ Part-Time ☐ Evening ☐ Shift ☐ Holiday ☐

10. Have you ever been convicted, served a jail sentence or been placed on probation after committing a felony or misdemeanor? If yes, give details in space provided in section # 11. (You may exclude juvenile offenses and minor traffic citations.) ☐ Yes ☐ No
Noting prior convictions will not necessarily exclude applicants from being hired.

11.

12. Use this space to add any job-related information to aid in considering your qualifications.

13. If hired, can you provide the necessary documents to verify that you are authorized to work in the U.S.? ☐ YES ☐ NO

EXPERIENCE: (Paid and Volunteer) It is very important that you present an accurate picture of how your experience qualifies you for employment. Starting with your most recent position, list **all** experience. Use additional sheets if necessary. Your qualifications will be initially determined based on this application. **Please be complete and specific to avoid disqualification.**

FROM: MO. YEAR
TO: MO. YEAR
Last Salary $ per
Full Time ☐ Part Time ☐ Hrs per week
Employer's Name
Address
Position Title
Duties:
Reason for Leaving

FROM: MO. YEAR
TO: MO. YEAR
Last Salary $ per
Full Time ☐ Part Time ☐ Hrs per week
Employer's Name
Address
Position Title
Duties:
Reason for Leaving

FROM: MO. YEAR
TO: MO. YEAR
Last Salary $ per
Full Time ☐ Part Time ☐ Hrs per week
Employer's Name
Address
Position Title
Duties:
Reason for Leaving

FROM: MO. YEAR
TO: MO. YEAR
Last Salary $ per
Full Time ☐ Part Time ☐ Hrs per week
Employer's Name
Address
Position Title
Duties:
Reason for Leaving

FROM: MO. YEAR
TO: MO. YEAR
Last Salary $ per
Full Time ☐ Part Time ☐ Hrs per week
Employer's Name
Address
Position Title
Duties:
Reason for Leaving

Résumés

There is often confusion about how, when and why to use a résumé. Some experts suggest that you offer it at the time of an interview. Others suggest a narrative proposal that tells what you can do for an employer. Still others say not to use one at all. You alone know which approach is best.

Basically, résumés are of two types: **chronological** and **functional**. **Chronological** means you list your skills and experience over the last ten years that fit the job you seek. **Functional** means that your skills family can be used to tailor the résumé to the job. As an example, if you have been a secretary and can list the jobs and duties you have performed, use an example of a chronological résumé. If you wish to leave any type of work that you have done in the past, match your skills family with the new goal. The new résumé will be a functional one. (Refer again to the list of verbs that describes your skills in Part A.)

Anything you can do that is a little different will help you stand out. This is especially true in your job search. That's exactly what this kit is all about. How can you do it...

- in your résumé?
- with a high impact, personalized cover letter?
- with a broadcast letter?
- by researching prospective employers?
- in your approach?
- by interviewing with flair?
- by following up effectively?
- in your entire job search process?

And of utmost importance, is your **approach to playing the job search game**! Read on to discover the secrets that let you make a powerful impact, win friends and influence decision makers. And best of all - to gain the job offer. Funny thing is, being different works for everybody, from executives to clerks - as long as your actions are sincere, honest and not too bizarre!

Résumés are used to screen people out! A necessary evil, a résumé rarely reflects one's ambition, work habits, personality and other intangibles that get them hired. You have less than five seconds to gain the reader's interest and attention - use it wisely!

In many cases, the ideal scenario is using your résumé as a follow-up to a personal meeting or a telephone conversation. It should be the final step in the job search process. Instead it is usually used in reverse, in an attempt to gain favorable attention and a personal interview.*

* If you are still hesitant or undecided about a job objective, please refer to your verb lists and previous achievements for clues.

Short and Sweet! - How Much and What Information Should Your Résumé Contain?

You've heard it all before.... Good résumés follow these simple criteria:

- be clear and concise - one page is appropriate for 90% of us.
- appealing format; easy to read.
- accomplishment oriented.
- focused or targeted toward a particular occupation, field or company.
- action verbs to describe your duties and accomplishments.
- objective which is pinpointed and not self serving.

It's easy to say but how do you do it?

The Triple A's in Résumé Writing - Why You Should Win the Interview

Since résumés are such a dangerous yet necessary part of the job search game, there must be a way to write a better one! Common sense dictates in this game of "damned if you do, damned if you don't," you should have something a little different.

This is where the Triple A's come in - **Awards, Accomplishments** and **Achievements**. Everybody has them! When putting your résumé (or résumé alternative together), what matters are examples of special things you have been involved in (go back and review pages 2-5 for your achievements). Examples include:

- saving money
- making money
- saving time
- special projects
- willingness to work
- awards
- honors
- ability to get things done
- promotions
- health record
- safety record
- publications

You don't have to single-handedly win the pennant for your team - many accomplishments take teamwork. Some may seem very modest but at the same time demonstrate you realize a company must be profitable to stay in business. For example:

- Contributed to branch sales efforts that resulted in team placing first among 11 western region branches in *Summer 1998 Sales Promotion* (1998)

- Helped company reduce overtime hours by assisting in several office improvements including a revamped filing system that allowed staff to locate customer data faster.

- Played an active role in company's computer conversions. (ABC Company)
- Used writing and communication skills to help company define and implement new job descriptions for all clerical and production employees.
- Participated in job safety meetings that helped company initiate several new procedures that reduced workers' compensation claims.

Quantify Your Accomplishments

The strongest **achievements** are measurable in terms of results. Remember yours? They are very important in résumé preparation. Use percentages, dollars or comparisons wherever possible to show the results of your actions. For example:

_ **Sales** (these are the easiest)

- Led six member sales team in computer switchbox sales during first quarter of 1998 (Triple R Electronics)
- Used cold calling and telemarketing to successfully open new territory (Triple R Electronics)
- Earned "Employee of the Month" award due to sales achievements and customer service (Macy's California, Electronic Products Department, September 1998)

_ **Engineering / Clinical / Technical** (often the most difficult)

- Developed an interface module in C to interface the communications of an industrial process controller.; Accustomed to meeting deadlines and completing work on schedule.
- Developed a fire protection plan outlining hazardous and protection areas for the Circle Hot Springs area (Alaska Fire Service)
- Assigned to patients using vaso-active drugs, IABP and LVAD - also given responsibility for patients requiring inter-cranial pressure monitoring (Lakefront Medical Center)
- Researched and modified lactose and whey powder test to save time and make testing procedures more efficient (XQZ Analytical Laboratory)

- Designed, assembled and recommended equipment for installation of new solvent filtration system at Unideck Corporation - given complete, independent responsibility for project.

Accomplishments should also be worded so that they reflect the direction in which you want your career to head. For example, the following case where the job seeker was seeking a "career shift" into sales:

- Demonstrated strong "people" and customer service abilities at Triple R Electronics -promoted to applications engineer due to communication skills.

- Used "natural" selling abilities and oral communication skills to rank near the top in Dale Carnegie Public Speaking and Human Relations course.

Review your skills from the word lists.

See the sample résumés that follow for other ideas about accomplishments, achievements and awards.

Targeting Your Résumé - Zoom in on the Job, Company and/or Industry

If you are seeking a career change, or are re-entering the job market, **functional transferable skills** can be utilized. Sample lists are:

_ Purchasing / Buying

- Source Searches
- Computer Operations
- Purchase Order Verification
- Order Expediting
- Product Comparisons
- Terms & Delivery Negotiation
- Vendor Relations
- Contract Negotiation
- Bid Initiation & Evaluation

_ Management

- Staff Selection & Training
- Budgeting & Marketing
- Bookkeeping/Record Keeping
- Policy & Procedure Making
- Sales / Customer Relations
- Union & Personnel Grievances
- Profit/Loss Accountability
- Merchandising & Display
- Inventory & Expense Controls
- Financing & Credit Management
- Scheduling & Quota Objectives
- Buying / Purchasing

_ **Software Engineering**

- User Interface Development
- Forth / Pascal / C Programming
- New Product Development
- Prototype Fabrication
- Mechanical Systems Automation
- Engineering Documentation
- Process Data Logger Implementation
- Real Time Machine Control

_ **General Office / Clerical**

- Typing: 40+ wpm
- Computer Data Entry
- Receptionist / Telephones
- Word Processing
- Customer Relations
- Ten Key by Touch
- Filing & Record Keeping
- Light Bookkeeping
- Some Lotus 1-2-3
- Dictaphone

This approach works well **for all fields** unless you rely heavily on education over experience or seek a **career change**.

Howell Craig, about to retire from the U.S. Air Force at age 50, used a different approach. After 30 years as a certified nurse's aide and then as a medical service specialist, he sought a position in the private realm in medical equipment sales, a field in which he had no experience. He devised a ***"Summary of Qualifications"*** which allowed him to focus on his customer service, retail sales and medical experience. It looked like this:

Summary of Qualifications

- Trained in medical terminology and understand intensive care processes, procedures and needs.
- Familiar with both disposable and non-disposable medical supplies, tools and pharmaceutical products.
- Knowledge of and able to use many types of technical capital equipment used by physicians, nurses and other health care professionals.
- Accustomed to providing excellent people/patient relations and representing employers in a professional manner.

This approach works best when seeking a career change or transition to a field in which you have some transferable skills, but limited or no experience. Three to five statements that reflect attributes you can bring to an entry level or career change position helps target your résumé. Let the reader know what he / she is reading. Focus on one career path.

Another use of this concept is when you have several skill areas a prospective employer may value. We call this a ***"Skills Summary"*** or ***"Qualifications Summary"***. It works like this:

Skills Summary

- **Computer Operations** - Program in C+, Java, Visual Basic languages... Operate personal computers...
- **Machine Maintenance** - Grease and oil production machinery... Make minor repairs to keep equipment up and running... Use most hand and power tools to maintain food processing equipment... Work in plant sanitation....
- **Warehousing** - Operate forklift (trained in both safety and operation)... Experience in shipping and handling... Monitor inventory of industrial chemicals and supplies....
- **Bookkeeping / Office Administration** - Studied bookkeeping in college and high school... Type: 50+ wpm... Operate ten key by touch... Operate personal computers... Understand Spanish language....

This is a good approach when you wish to cover several, diverse skill areas, but not as powerful as targeting your résumé specifically toward a certain position. Just the same, many small and medium-sized companies need a person with diverse skills. If you seek this type of company, and have several distinct career path possibilities, this may be the right résumé approach for you.

Personal Data on Your Résumé

While it was once common to include personal information (and even a photograph) on a résumé, this "lost art" is rarely practiced anymore. When done without exposing any apparent negatives, we encourage people to use this tactic for several reasons:

- it adds color / conversation to what is often a boring and unexciting document.
- it gives you a chance to express personality traits or other information that should prove valuable in weighing your qualifications and abilities.
- it gives you a vehicle to allude to other training, employment, activities, memberships or personal items that can be favorable

Examples follow:

- Married, two grown children - able to work weekends or swing shift if needed.
- Excellent health - never filed workers' compensation or disability claim; passed extensive physical exam and drug screen prior to joining MMM Industries.
- Active in church fund raising and event planning activities.
- Paid for college education.
- Enjoy walking, bicycling and golf as time allows.

The first item expresses ability to consider weekend or swing shift work. Marital status is believed to be an asset. Many employers are more inclined to hire one with personal commitments that make work more important and make it appear the applicant could stay longer once trained. Listing two grown children, does imply you are at least 40 years of age. The second item proves good health. The old "excellent health" routine has no meaning unless proven. The third item shows other skills that could be of value and suggests the high moral or ethical caliber of a church-goer.

The fourth item shows the ability to take responsibility and willingness to earn what you get in life. It also shows you had the drive and determination to invest in your future and took the initiative to do something without financial assistance, both seen as desirable traits by most employers. The fifth shows physical activity and subsequently, a likelihood of better health.

Be creative. A personal section allows you the freedom to discuss events in your background that are interesting, important to your future, or to cover up gaps or inconsistencies in your background without misrepresenting yourself in any way.

A word of caution - try to list only items that probably will not get you in trouble or get you screened out of a prospective interview. This is a nebulous area because what is advantageous in one situation is not always interpreted the same in another. You're dealing with subjective and diverse personalities here.

Objectives - Who Wants What?

You should use an objective on your résumé only when it has meaning. A meaningful objective is not self serving. State what you seek concisely and precisely. Do not allow your objective to make demands. A good objective specifically describes a position and even a company to which you apply. This might mean redoing your résumé every time the same way you would your cover letter. Draw the reader a map.

Good examples include:

- To manage a manufacturing facility with full profit and loss accountability. Preferred company will be rapidly growing and/or implementing new technologies.
- Computer Programmer / Analyst
- To secure a long-term, challenging opportunity in a purchasing / buying capacity.
- Seeking a sales position with an organization offering advancement possibilities based on contributions to company profits.
- To secure a Receptionist / General Office position with EFGH Company.

While each objective is direct and to the point, the first is best. It clearly states exactly what you seek at what level of responsibility. The second example simply focuses on the type of position you seek. This leaves little doubt about your ambition or level of expected responsibility. The third is very similar in being fairly direct.

The fourth applicant wants advancement possibilities based on performance. It shows he/she knows a company must show a profit to stay in business and expects to be promoted only after significant contributions. The fifth is a targeted objective directed to a specific company and position.

Don't forget a résumé usually is a tool to get you face-to-face with a hiring authority. Creativity and originality count when in good taste. Dare to be a little different. Today's laser printing makes résumés very attractive and attention getting. This is the desired look opposed to expensive typesetting, typewriter prepared or computer printer generated. Spend $15 to $25 to get the image you deserve. Aside from saying the right things, your résumé reflects you! Make it professional and readable.

Your résumé should be printed on a good quality linen, parchment or quality paper (usually 20 to 28 pound). We often suggest a gray, buff, brown or gold color, not white. The following pages show examples of several résumés and résumé alternatives for your use.

_ Please Note _

Each résumé, letter, and résumé alternatives that follows was submitted on a single sheet of paper. The samples you see are enlarged for readability. Your job search document should almost always be restricted to a single page.

Functional Resume #1

Barbara Z. Beavers
6752 E. Washington Drive
Seattle, Washington 90818
(360) 473-4588

POSITION OBJECTIVE: Employee Trainer in Industry

QUALIFICATIONS IN BRIEF:

- B.A. in English, SUNY at Plattsburg, NY, 1973
- Eight years of elementary school teaching
- Fluent in Spanish
- Demonstrated skills in instructions, supervision, communications and human relations

EXPERIENCE SUMMARY:

Instruction

- Planned, organized, presented language and mathematics instructional material to elementary students
- Developed instructional modules to solve specific learning problems
- Developed instructional audio-visual material, used audio-visual equipment such as overhead, opaque and movie projectors, audio and video cassettes
- Conducted extensive research in various curricula
- Served on curriculum development committee
- Introduced new motivational techniques for students

Supervision:

- Supervised students groups, teacher interns, and a classroom aide; evaluated students, peers, and programs
- Moderated student activities

Communications:

- Presented new curriculum plans to parent groups; sent periodic progress reports to parents
- Developed and published classroom newsletter

Human Relations:

- Conducted effective problem solving/conflict resolution between individuals and groups
- Initiated program of student self-governance
- Acted as liaison between families of diverse cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds and school personnel/services
- Conducted individual and group conferences to establish rapport with parents and discuss student progress

CURRENT EMPLOYER:

Weston Elementary School, Seattle, Washington

REFERENCES: Provided upon request. Please do not contact my present employer without my consent.

Functional Résumé #1 - This is another example of a functional résumé which stresses duties and achievements over employment history. It is best used when it is advantageous to not give an indication of one's age; when making a career change; when an individual has a background of closely related positions and duties; or in an attempt to de-emphasize several jobs of relatively short duration. Company names are optional but usually recommended to reduce suspicion of hiding something. This approach is especially useful for mature workers who have been out of the work force or employed in short term or volunteer positions.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Functional Résumé #2

MARY G. JOHNSON
3409 East Locke Road
Sacramento, California 95409
(916) 765-9533

OBJECTIVE:

To obtain a position utilizing clerical / general office skills.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS:

Performed the following duties at Beatrice / Hunt-Wesson and Contadina Foods, Inc.:

- Operated 36-line switchboard; took and routed calls.
- Greeted visitors and represented company in a friendly, professional manner.
- Interviewed and screened 200 to 600 applicants per year.
- Coordinated pre-employment drug tests with medical provider and laboratory.
- Insured compliance with collective bargaining agreement and adhered to EEO guidelines and immigration laws.
- Handled workers' compensation and personal insurance claims.
- Investigated and completed inquiries regarding employees.
- Planned and coordinated special projects.
- Discussed work-related situations and grievances with employees.
- Maintained personnel records on all employees.
- Used ten key, computerized switchboard, IBM System 36 and personal computers.

EDUCATION:

Sacramento City College; Sacramento, CA
Business major (off and on, 1967-78)

Modesto Junior College; Modesto, CA
Completed Computer Training course (1989) - program included Lotus 1-2-3, WordPerfect, dBase III and Microsoft Word applications

Completed numerous seminars regarding personnel office functions and employment laws

AWARDS:

- Earned "Secretary of the Year" award in event sponsored by the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce (1976)
- Won two annual "Perfect Attendance" awards with Contadina Foods

References furnished upon request

Functional Résumé #2 - This résumé style is usually preferred when age, job hopping or a career "shift" is a factor. It allows you to focus on specific talents and skills without indicating specifically where these abilities were gained. It is also obvious, however that you may be trying to hide something. See the Improved Reverse Chronological Résumé on page 34 for another version of Mary Johnson.

Reverse Chronological Résumé

MARY G. JOHNSON
3409 East Locke Road
Sacramento, California 95409
(916) 765-9533

OBJECTIVE:

To obtain a position utilizing clerical / general office skills.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

3/89 to 3/90 — BEATRICE / HUNT-WESSON FOODS; Modesto, CA
Secretary / Receptionist

- Operated 36-line switchboard for this company.
- Took and routed calls.
- Assisted accounting department with typing and clerical duties as time allowed.
- Greeted visitors.

6/58 to 4/88 — CONTADINA FOODS, Inc.; Sacramento, CA
Assistant to Personnel Manager (1978-88)
Secretary - Personnel Department (1963-78)
Production Worker (1958-63)

- Started on production line prior to promotion to personnel department secretary in 1963.
- Interviewed and screened 200 to 600 applicants per year.
- Coordinated pre-employment drug tests with medical provider and laboratory.
- Insured compliance with collective bargaining agreement and adhered to EEO guidelines and immigration laws.
- Handled workers' compensation and personal insurance claims.

- Investigated and completed inquiries regarding employees.
- Planned and coordinated special projects.
- Discussed work-related situations and grievances with employees.
- Maintained personnel records on all employees.
- Used typewriters, dictaphone, ten key, computerized switchboard, IBM System 36 and personal computers.

EDUCATION:

Sacramento City College; Sacramento, CA
Business major (off and on, 1967-78)

Modesto Junior College; Modesto, CA
Completed Computer Training course (1989) - program included Lotus 1-2-3, WordPerfect, dBase III and Microsoft Word applications

Completed numerous seminars regarding personnel office functions and employment laws

AWARDS:

- Earned "Secretary of the Year" award in event sponsored by the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce (1976)
- Won two annual "Perfect Attendance" awards with Contadina Foods

References furnished upon request

Reverse Chronological Résumé - This format is <u>rarely</u> the most effective way of presenting your qualifications. It differs from a functional résumé in that it lists actual dates of employment. In many situations, being over 50 is an obstacle in the job search game. It is rarely a good idea to advertise. See the next page for a functional version of Mary Johnson's qualifications.

Improved Reverse Chronological Résumé

Larry E. Jessie

1407 Walling Place
Modesto, California 95351

Home: (209) 523-5436
Work: (415) 832-3569

SKILLS SUMMARY

Work history includes the following skills and areas of experience:

_ Administrative / Clerical (over 10 years)

- •Typing: 55 wpm... Wang Word Processing... ten key by sight... cash register... switchboard....
- •Handle customer / vendor verbal and written communication... write and edit articles and correspondence for newsletters or informational purposes... create flyers for soliciting sales and promotions....
- •Establish and implement office systems for improved efficiency... develop and maintain numerical and other filing systems....
- •Post cash receipts to customer accounts... monitor and maintain sales records...
- •Use strong human relations abilities to interact with and maintain good relations with management, customers and vendors....

_ Personnel / Human Resources Management (over 6 years)

- • Maintain and insure accuracy of personnel records including payroll documents....
- • Assign personnel to tasks and delegate responsibilities to insure timely and accurate completion of duties....
- • Schedule work loads and prioritize activities according to deadlines and resources....

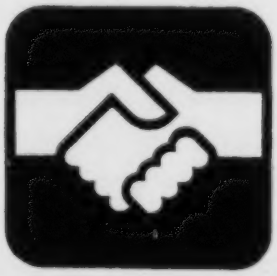
_ Supervisory Experience

- Hire, train, evaluate and terminate personnel and direct activities of internal support staff...
- Resolve personnel disputes or problems and apply appropriate disciplinary measures....

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Police Clerk - CITY OF MODESTO; Modesto, CA	1985-90
Shift Supervisor - TUBBS CORDAGE; Dos Palos, CA	1983-84
Warehouse Technician - PROCTER & GAMBLE; Modesto, CA	1982-83
Shipping Clerk - SCHUMANN PRODUCTS; Turlock, CA	1981
Sales Consultant - LAWTON PUBLISHING COMPANY; Lawton, OK	1980
NCO / Personnel Manager - U.S. ARMY	1960-80

References available upon request



Improved Chronological Résumé - This document is similar to a functional résumé except that specific employers and dates are provided. As a retired military person, Mr. Jessie wished to express skills gained in the army without drawing direct attention to the fact that active utilization of these skills goes back more than 10 years.

Résumé Letter Alternative #1

A résumé letter alternative is an optional approach for getting your message across without the confines and restrictions imposed by what is expected in a résumé.....

JOHN TALADA

351 Bee Hive Drive
Yakima, WA 98901

(209) 525-4545 (Residence)
(209) 578-3221 (Business)

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am very interested in joining your organization as a bus driver. After more than 25 years of management experience in the business world, I have, after careful consideration, turned down a transfer away from the Yakima area to make a permanent "career shift" into this field.

With some experience in bus driving, I can bring the following background and qualifications to your organization:

- I have earned a Class 2 Driver's License and take pride in my safe and "clean" driving record.
- As a volunteer at my church, I have driven a regular bus route for the past two years and have safely picked up and delivered children to our Sunday School Program.

As previously indicated, I am no longer interested in the monetary rewards and pressure demanded of accounting managers. I can be perfectly happy driving for you and do not need, or expect a great deal of compensation for my services.

Considered honest, forthright and dedicated to anything I pursue, I enjoy all types of people. Please give me an opportunity to meet with you to discuss you needs. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Talada

Résumé Letter Alternative #2

GALEN BLACK
2216 Mars Bar
Merced, California 95240
(209) 434-9889

Re: Employment Qualifications

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am interested in finding suitable part-time employment as a Bus Driver, Courier, Janitor, Guard or in Landscaping Maintenance. My qualifications are listed below:

Driving - Over 30 years of experience as a traveling Installer, Repair Maintenance and Construction work with Pacific Bell...Excellent driving record...Interact with all types of people...DMV printout and proof of insurance available upon request...Bondable.

Janitorial - Perform light maintenance and janitorial work...Equipment skills include: variety of hand and power tools...electrical experience including prewiring.

Landscaping - Yard work...Tree trimming...Pruning...Sprinkler systems...Tree removal...Wood Cutting...Lawn and garden preparation, seeding and maintenance...odd jobs.

Additional Skills - Tractor operations...Dairy ranching...Automobile maintenance including tuneups, oil changes and belt, hose and filter replacements.

In addition to the above skills, I spent 31½ years with Pacific Bell.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you in person how my qualifications will be an asset to your firm.

Please contact me at your earliest convenience to arrange a personal meeting. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Cordially,

Galen Black

Each of the above Résumé Letter Alternatives are excellent ways to get your message across without discussing age or the specifics regarding your employment history.

Cover Letters

A cover letter is an extra selling tool which can be used along with the application or resume. Circumstances will dictate if all three are used. It can never hurt to enclose a cover letter to tell prospective employers what a good employee you would be, how much you know about the company, and what you can do for them. It should be short, neat, and a concise picture of you, the person. As a mature worker you have the advantage of making this cover letter shine to encourage interviews and job offers.

As previously described, **a good cover letter or broadcast letter is always personalized and customized to a specific individual, company and industry.** Follow these guidelines:

- Always enclose a cover letter when you mail a résumé.
- Individually prepare and sign each letter. Do not use a preprinted form letter. **Exception:** In many situations it is permissible to hand write or print a cover letter. It depends on one's professional stature and geographic location.
- Address your letter to a specific person. Do not become junk mail!
- If you don't know the correct person's name and title; you can usually get it by phoning the company and asking the receptionist. (Ask for proper spelling!)
- Do not send letters/résumés to personnel departments unless there is no other way.
- The cover letter should not cover the same ground as your résumé. It should sum up your qualifications, answer why you would be of value to the organization, close for the interview and/or be accomplishment oriented.
- Your cover letter may reflect your individuality but should never make you appear overbearing, cute, conceited or cocky. Avoid "slang" or "in" words to enhance your chance of making a favorable impression.
- With local firms, take the initiative by telephoning for an interview.
- With out-of-town firms, indicate a willingness to make the trip for an interview at your own expense. Give dates when you will be in town.
- Use a good quality paper that matches your résumé.
- Make sure it looks neat and professional. Is your computer printer in good working condition?
- Proof read for spelling or punctuation errors.
- Communicate something personal (make it known it is not just another form letter).
- Communicate at least one specific value that shows what you can do.
- Use the jargon or language of the field in which you are applying.
- Ask for the interview just as you will ask for the job.

Examples follow:

Cover Letter Sample #1

Frederick Hines
3457 Alston Road
Ellensburg, WA 98928
(509) 848-9029

May 28, 1998

Continental Airlines
Employment Office
P.O. Box 4607
Houston, Texas 77210-4607

Dear Sir or Madam:

My resume and application are enclosed in response to my request for information concerning flight attendant opportunities with Continental Airlines.

As previously discussed, I am an active 59-year-old who has learned your firm will consider hiring people over 50 who are looking for a second or third career opportunity. As you know, just to consider an opportunity of this nature cannot be a decision made lightly. I have always been fascinated by the prospect of working as a flight attendant and realize it will take commitment and the ability to work hard.

Recognized as a person with diverse skills and experiences, I enjoy working both for and with people. I am in excellent health, have no obligations to keep me from my work, and know I would truly enjoy this exciting occupation.

If you seek a sincere, friendly, capable team player, please give me every consideration. Thank you in advance for your consideration and prompt response.

Sincerely,

Gerald F. Johnson
Enclosures

Cover Letter Sample #1 - This was the actual letter used by Fred Hines to help him land an interview with a major domestic airlines. It is not always advantageous to discuss your age but by being up front, you will not be wasting both the interviewer's time as well as your own.

Cover Letter Sample #2

Davis L. Drucker
2030 Louis Lane
Fremont, CA 94539
(415) 490-7855

June 12, 1998

Mr. Roger Aranson
FPC Communications
P.O. Box 1997
Fremont, CA 94538

Dear Mr. Aranson:

I am very interested in exploring the possibility of joining FPC Communications in a customer service capacity. My resume is enclosed in response to your recent advertisement in *The Argus.*

As you will note, my background includes considerable customer / public relations skills. In addition, I can bring the following less tangible assets to FPC:

- hard working and dedicated, I have worked more than 50 hours per week with my present employer and am willing to make personal sacrifices for the good of my company
- accustomed to handling people in a soft spoken, friendly manner, I have been in situations where I had to deal effectively with irate people
- having learned that FPC is a growing and very progressive firm, I believe I possess many of the attributes you look for in a new employee including excellent health and the ability to pass your drug screening examination

Recognized by former employers as a reliable, friendly team player who also works well independent of supervision, I would like to meet with you. I will call you next Thursday to discuss the feasibility of a personal meeting. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Davis L. Drucker

This letter is a good example of a cover document that should elicit a favorable response. Although the position is essentially entry level in nature and could generate hundreds of responses, the writer has made every effort to show his knowledge of the company.

Broadcast Letters

Did you ever wonder if there was a better way to write a résumé or other job seeking document? Wouldn't it be nice to avoid drawing attention to your education, age or work experience deficiencies? It would be interesting to have something a little bit different.

Have you ever heard of a broadcast letter? Developed by Carl Boll and his job search group a few years back, a broadcast letter is a direct mail, résumé alternative which focuses only on your personal achievements and accomplishments. Remember your previous experience.

The idea is to think carefully about anything you have done that you feel good about. The best accomplishments are those which help a company make money, save money, or save time. How about awards, special projects in which you played a role, attendance records, driving records....? Remember those work performance reviews you had every year?

Why were you successful in your previous endeavors? Was it due to your wisdom, your intelligence, your way with people? What abilities and personal traits did you demonstrate?

Be specific about the examples you have chosen. Use numbers, percentages or other data to confirm your achievements wherever possible. This helps paint a more vivid, concrete picture of your successes. When done properly a broadcast letter is a direct mail piece targeted toward a certain occupation or industry. It stresses only those things you consider to be the high points or accomplishments of your life or career. Look at the advantages over a résumé:

- First, because you deal with accomplishments here, your page isn't wasted with job description data. Achievements ultimately make a big difference in helping you get in the door. **(Use your self selected skills verbs as an outline of your achievements.)**

- It's **DIFFERENT** - it's not just another résumé. Anything you can do to be a little unique will often get favorable attention, and thus a better chance of being noticed.

- It lets you omit educational background and employment history. These areas often get people in trouble right away. In your broadcast letter, you may put down only things to your benefit.

- An especially effective tool for those over 50!

The success of broadcast letters is proven. And still few people use it - or have even heard of it.

As in most job search campaigns, broadcast letters must be used by the "numbers" to get results. A mailing of at least 100 should bring a 2 percent to 6 percent favorable response. There is no limitation to their use. Whether you're an executive, a bookkeeping clerk or a dishwasher, target a broadcast letter to fit your career goal and try it.

The Accomplishment Approach

Whether you decide to try a broadcast letter or not, you can take several approaches to develop a strong letter. These techniques work with cover letters as well.

One such approach is the accomplishment angle. You want to start with a statement that will get attention and encourage someone to read on. Examples include:

- In 1988 with Johnson Industries, I helped my company save $11,000 by negotiating one year extended warranties on all components of a new mainframe computer system.
- As #2 salesperson in an eleven member team, I know how to develop rapport with prospective customers and understand what can be achieved through hard work.
- With P & P Enterprises, I helped establish a new color coded filing system that saved approximately 2½ hours per week in locating customer records.

Note: accomplishments need not be things you did entirely on your own. Also remember: they should be quantifiable, in numbers, percentages, hours, dollars, etc. when possible.

The remainder of your letter should include other examples of things you did that made money, saved money, saved time or made a difference to your company. They may also include personal honors, awards or things that set you apart, such as an idea that was implemented, an employee of the month award, your attendance record, driving record, etc... **Be creative.**

The Reference or Referral Approach

This approach takes advantage of your knowing somebody with some reader respect. It's simple. Based on networking efforts through friends, relatives, etc., it works like this:

- Ben Smith at Triple L Farms indicated you may be looking for a new farm manager at your Kansas Produce ranch.
- According to Mary Roberts, you are currently looking for a new sales professional to fill the opening in your leasing department.

- Seeking a challenging Accounting Manager position, Len Ryder suggested I contact you about opportunities with H & L Plastics.

There are only two rules. Have permission to use his/her name. Be sure the person you are contacting thinks highly of your referral. It's simple and impressive.

The Philosophical Approach

This approach requires you to rely on personal beliefs to gain favorable attention. It deals primarily with a set of beliefs that may or may not be in keeping with those of the interviewer or organization one is directing his/her efforts toward. The idea is to take a shot, when nothing else is known, that you hit the right button. Examples include:

- A good teacher must have patience, truly love her/his work and be a strong disciplinarian to create an effective classroom learning environment.
- No counseling skill is more important than excellent listening. Many people claim to hear what is said but to truly "hear" requires more than just good ears.
- Managing people effectively is a lot like raising children. I believe in developing good work habits, building trust and keeping an open door policy.

If you don't hit the right hot buttons, you may have missed the target. It's another one of those hit or miss propositions that could work marvelously, or cause you to fall with a thud!

Using this approach, try not to be offensive, rigid or controversial. Outline your personal philosophy and use those concepts that are likely to be uncontested. Be prepared to back up your beliefs in the interview.

The Startling Statement Approach

If the other approaches leave you cold, now you can really have some fun. The Startling Statement Approach is completely creative:

- Ken Kraft summed it up when he stated, "The nearest to perfection most people come is when filling out an employment application." Anybody can look good on paper but what about one's true ability to get the job done in an efficient, cost-effective way?
- When I visited Japan in 1988, I saw first hand what team work and a "we" attitude can do in the workplace.

- According to Arthur Brisbane, "the dictionary is the only place where success comes before work." It takes hard work, dedication and long hours to succeed as a financial consultant. It is these intangible traits I can bring to EFG Financial.

You need extreme caution with this approach. You can easily come off as smug, pompous, arrogant, lacking in taste or even smarter than the one you would impress. It is sometimes best to try this approach as an experiment when all else fails. Workers over 50 can benefit from both approaches.

What have you got to lose? Many résumés are rejected because you volunteer too much about your past. This is **different**! You could get instant attention. You might want to invest in a book of famous quotes before trying this approach. See the following sample:

Broadcast Letter Sample

Richard Rial
28488 Mission Boulevard
Hayward, California 94544
(415) 781-5492

Ms. Laurie Peck
Bank of California
P.O. Box 2390
Oakland, CA 94510

Dear Ms. Peck:

Ken Kraft summed it up when he stated, "The nearest to perfection most people come is when filling out an employment application." Anybody can look good on paper but what about one's true ability to get the job done in an efficient, cost-effective way?

With over 30 years of experience in the insurance field, in both sales and adjusting, I have learned the value of customer service. Retired in 1990, I have considerable energy and enthusiasm and would like to investigate the possibility of a "second" career in the banking field as a Teller / Customer Service Representative.

I understand that your firm is not opposed to hiring experienced workers. Considered a friendly, professional, fast learner, I believe I possess many of the traits you would find attractive in a new employee.

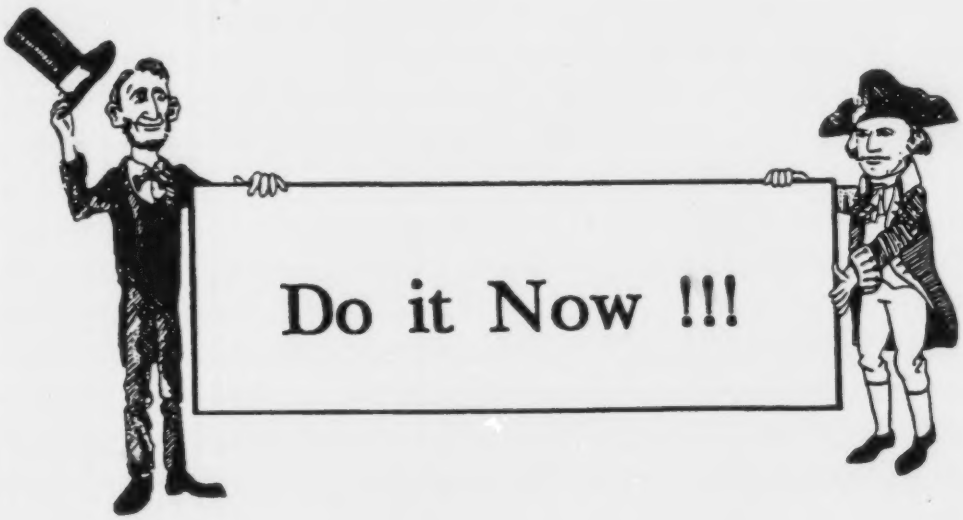
As Kraft implied, you can not judge a person's value by what is stated on a piece of paper.

As a result, I would like to meet with you **in person** to further discuss employment opportunities with the Bank of California. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Rial

Broadcast Letter Sample - Imagine the possibilities! You can use this creative technique to produce a résumé alternative that is original, provoking and interesting. Although this example follows the "Startling Statement" approach. The other types discussed above can work equally as well.



PART C
INTERVIEWING BASICS

Many fine books on today's market discuss interviewing. Find and use one that makes sense to you.

Think of an interview as having two stages. **Stage one** is for your preparation in finding out as much about the employer as is possible, rehearsing in private about what you might be asked, and personal preparation for the day of the interview.

Stage two is the actual face to face meeting. Let the interviewer lead the conversation to start, don't interrupt and answer questions put to you in a confident manner.

As a mature job seeker, you may be afraid that you either have too little experience or too much for what the employer wants. Listen to what questions are asked and how. Respond accordingly.

This may be a wonderful opportunity to discuss your positive qualities such as punctuality, dependability, tact, and competence; self management skills that mature workers have in abundance.

If the interview questions focus on fast pace, young supervisors, training, hiring costs, illness, etc., it is up to you to politely dispel some of the myths about the mature worker by your own answers. You will help yourself immensely in how you handle these questions as well as indirectly help other mature workers that this employer may interview. This employer is often acting out of fear and mis-information about the capacity of mature workers.

Answer every question as it matches you as a person and of the job requirements. Do not become defensive if the questions seem unfair. Often the interviewer doesn't know how to interview effectively and is as tense and anxious as you are.

Be positive, ask for the job if you want it, discuss when you should call back, and always send a thank you note. Don't ask about salary at this time. Please refer to the job lead list example in the back of this book.

"Make yourself necessary to somebody."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Informational Interviewing - Help or Hindrance?

Informational interviewing can be an effective networking tool. Done properly, it can allow you to sneak in the back door and get past hundreds of other would be applicants.

There are thousands of examples of successful informational interviews. Successful informational interviewing takes tact, enthusiasm, study and a carefully thought out plan. Questions vary from industry to company to specific hiring procedures. Samples include:

- How is the company aligned by department?
- What employment opportunities are currently offered?
- How are applicants recruited?
- How many people are considered / interviewed for each position?
- What are the company's minimum requirements?
- What criteria is used to judge between equally qualified applicants?
- Who does the interviewing for each department?
- What advice would you give an applicant who is interested in joining the company?
- What is the pay scale, benefits, work standards, shifts, method of evaluation, etc.?
- What are the most positive aspects of the job?
- What are the least positive aspects of the job?
- What type of turnover is there in the department? What is this attributed to (whether high or low)?
- What is the average length of time prior to promotion?
- What traits do the most successful people share?
- How might responsibilities change over time?

Case History - Just Use Your Hand

Martha L. felt that she was often overlooked for good career opportunities due to shyness. Her seemingly passive, introverted personality left her unable to convey a sense of confidence in job interviews. She needed to find a way to make a lasting impression.

With a background in general office work, she longed for an exciting career in customer service with a mid-sized winery. At age 51 and always professionally dressed, she prepared for her big interview. She did her homework on the company she was seeking a position with and was ready for her big day. She was also prepared to try something a little different.

After being called in to meet with the sales manager, she enthusiastically bounced up, made eye to eye contact, smiled warmly and boldly offered her hand to shake with the sales manager. Three things resulted. First, after a cordial interview it was apparent that she was

not as well qualified for the position as others before her. Second, the sales manager was very moved by her confidence. Thirdly, guess who got the job? Yep, Martha L.

The sales manager later revealed no job applicant offer ever offered him a hand before he first offered his. He was moved and impressed by the simple action. In addition, Martha's approach helped give her needed confidence and set the tone for the entire interview. You still don't believe it's a game? Read on....

The Hidden Job Market - How You Can Tap It!

Networking - how many times have you heard it? Forget all the excuses - like you don't know anyone. So how do you do it?

- Friends, family, friends of friends - Tell everybody you know you seeking a job or career change. Ask for advice and names of people who might be able to help. Follow your leads with brief, cordial phone calls. If they can't help, ask for names of others who may.

- It is never too late to develop an effective network - quickly! Use people's names to get to the people with whom you need to speak.

- Don't rely on your local newspaper's classified section to find out what jobs are out there. Approximately 80 percent of the jobs in your community aren't advertised in any publication. Many excellent positions are about to become available or are waiting for the right person to come along. Make it happen. The telephone is your best friend.

- Volunteer your talents with a local civic organization or not for profit group. Read on and see how it worked for Jerry W.

Case History - He Networked Himself Into the Job!

Jerry W. was not happy with his situation in life. He "fell" into the construction field after high school and bounced around from job to job until he was 38. He was good at what he did and gained experience in virtually all aspects of construction from framing, finish carpentry, electrical, plumbing, concrete and heavy equipment operation. He woke up one day and realized it was time to build a future.

With strong interests in engineering, city planning and a good understanding of local building codes, he volunteered one night a week with a county planning agency. Like many counties, his had serious budgetary problems and welcomed any citizens offer of

time and expertise. He found himself working with key civic leaders who had numerous community contacts.

After diligently demonstrating his knowledge and making friendships in this group, an excellent county position became available in hazardous waste management. Why not Jerry? He got a job even though he was pitted against Ph.D.s experienced in the field. Like most good jobs, it's who you know even though Jerry knew nobody just 11 weeks earlier!

You Failed to Get the Job? - Reasons Why

People hire people. Often intangibles make a difference. It is estimated that 80 percent of an interview is how well you relate to the interviewer. This includes personality, eye contact, smile, voice, listening and vocabulary. F.S. Endicott, Placement Director at Northwestern University, conducted a study of large companies and found 20 top factors in interview failure:

- *poor personal appearance*
- *overaggressive, conceited, know it all attitude*
- *poor voice or grammar; inability to express one's self*
- *no purpose or goal in life*
- *no interest; lack of attention*
- *solitary; non-participation in activities*
- *interest only in money / tangible personal rewards*
- *poor academic record; just got by*
- *expects too much; unwilling to "pay dues"*
- *evasive; makes excuses*
- *rude and abrasive; lacking tact*
- *discourteous*
- *critical of past employers*
- *lacking in social graces*
- *dislike for study or school work*
- *tired, unenthusiastic; lack of energy*
- *little eye to eye contact*
- *loose, wimpy hand-shake*

Surprised? Don't be. Other setbacks include *inactivity on vacations, unhappy married life, little sense of humor, inability to make decisions, low moral standards, strong prejudices, narrow interests, asking no questions about the job* and *ignorance of the company*!

Character Traits - Which Ones Land Jobs?

Everybody has specific strengths. Know your strengths and weaknesses. Just as interviewers look for certain qualifications when evaluating résumés, they look for specific intangible personality traits when interviewing:

- honesty
- ambition
- how will you fit in with the team
- communication skills
- dependability
- thoroughness
- motivation
- enthusiasm

Ask yourself which positive personality traits you have and how to demonstrate them in the interview. Be prepared to give specific examples of things you have done in your work, as a volunteer, in sports, in school or in life that express your strengths. You have a chance to leave a lasting impression by sharing real events in your life that show what kind of person you are. Take your strengths from the intangible to the tangible. **(Refer to your life achievements)**.

Case History - Target Your Approach

Mary P. landed a great entry-level position by "targeting" her search. Since graduating from high school, Mary P. moved from job to job in secretarial and clerical positions. After working for three different companies in two years, she grew increasingly dissatisfied and felt she lacked a true career.

She was mildly interested in becoming a nurse but didn't have the time or the money to return to school. How could she get started in that new career now?

By applying for jobs in hospitals and other nurse-related positions she was soon offered a position as an Admitting Clerk in a hospital close to her home. One of the critical factors behind her successful job search was wanting to work toward a nursing career. This ambition, when expressed to hospital hiring authorities became a reason to consider her over other equally qualified applicants.

At age 58, Mary P. got the job! The moral? Choose an occupation or industry in which you feel you might like to work - and attack it fully. As you interview and learn more and more about a particular area, you gain knowledge. This will rapidly allow you to know more than 98 percent of the other people competing for the job.

Your résumé or other job search tools should focus on this direction. What if you fail to land that job? No problem. Just pick another career, field or industry. The more specific your job target the better off you will be. It is reassuring for the hiring person to know he/she found somebody who knows exactly what they want and can offer it. The chance that you will last and be successful in your new post appears much better when you know (or appear to know) what you want. Insist on a "no obligation" agreement with the
employer should an employment
opportunity be extended.

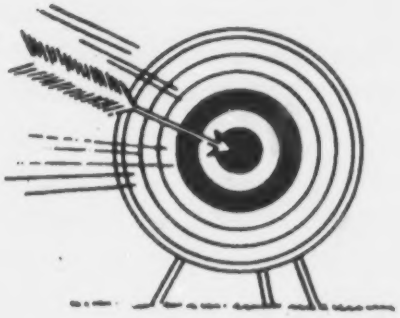
Temporary work is an excellent vehicle for mature workers to gain exposure, experience and credibility.

Most important, no matter what type(s) of agency you work with, do not restrict yourself to only this job-seeking approach. While most people in this field are cordial and want to help, their promises are not always kept. Don't sit back and wait for the phone to ring.

What about Mary P.? She worked for five years as an Admitting Clerk in two different hospitals and then tried something else. She lost her desire to pursue a nursing career but she gained five good years of work experience with decent pay and a "career" direction.

Temporary Agencies

The boon of the '90's and beyond. Temporary workers are much in demand. We have seen situations where a person begins in a temporary capacity, has the opportunity to impress management and gets a full time, permanent job offer when a position becomes available. While this is usually the exception, some companies will not hire you because of the complications and fees involved. Insist on a "no obligation" agreement with the employer should an employment opportunity be extended.



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Job Hunters Clubs

In some cities groups of people meet to exchange ideas, leads and job hunting techniques. Ask for one near you. It can provide virtually all of the benefits job search consultants do - **free!**

Sometimes sponsored by employment agencies, résumé services, churches or non profit organizations, people come and go as needed (hopefully very quickly). Remember that in your job search, people are your biggest allies. It's amazing from what unexpected source a strong job lead may come. Find a Forty Plus Club in a metropolitan area.

Case History - Volunteer Negatives

John V. enlisted the support and services of a large, nationally known job search consulting firm. Spending more than $4,000 for résumé preparation, consulting and outplacement services, he was unable to land one interview after three months of tedious effort.

In desperation he attended a free seminar on résumé preparation sponsored by a small town professional résumé service. After the hour long presentation, he approached the lecturer and asked for a free critique of his résumé. While it was very professional, well written and accomplishment oriented - there was one startling problem. John V. was 56 years old. It said so right there in black and white!

By the same token, there is nothing in the annals of résumé writing that demands you reveal your age if is not in your best interest. If you must use your résumé to get in the door, do not volunteer negatives that close it before it's even jarred.

John V. later admitted he gained more insight into the job search process in this free one hour seminar, than he had purchased for more than $4,000 from his job search consultants. Sometimes the answers you seek come from the most unexpected sources.

Case History - Follow Up Before You Land the Interview

Elaine B. would not let her résumé do her talking. She knew that a résumé, no matter how well done, would not likely get her the job she wanted.

A steel manufacturer in her area advertising an opening for a customer service person in her local newspaper, asked for a résumé. Rather than send hers and be counted as another in the stack of more than a hundred, she planned a personal lunch hour visit.

But first, she called the company and politely asked for the name of the department manager so she could personalize her letter. She then spent an hour researching the company. Although little was readily available, she successfully found some information about the company's product, history and size.

The next day she paid her visit. She cordially asked if Mr. Johnson, the department manager, was available for a moment. Luckily he was and she had the opportunity to personally deliver her qualifications. She expressed her interest in the company, explained what she knew about them and asked for the chance to meet with him again in an interview. Mr. Johnson stated rather firmly that they were waiting to review résumés and that she would be contacted if she were among the best candidates. She thanked him for his time and left. That evening she took the time to write Mr. Johnson a brief letter in which she again expressed her interest in the company, her qualifications, and her thanks for giving her a few moments during her visit.

Elaine B. was no longer just a piece of paper. While many applicants had better qualifications, her strategy worked. She got the interview... and the job!

Moral: Elaine B. met and followed up with her key contact before she was even granted an interview. Anything you can do that is a little different to show your initiative, enthusiasm and motivation goes a long way toward being more than a piece of paper.

Always Personalize & Customize Your Written Materials

It's amazing how many professional - even executive level people - cut corners and send letters not personally addressed to an individual and company. This is not an effective means of saving time and money.

Just as you are more likely to read and take seriously mail personally addressed to you, so it is in your job search. Think how impressed the reader might be when even your résumé is personalized to his/her company as discussed above.

First Impressions

Never forget the importance of the first ten seconds of an interview or other personal meeting. Eye to eye contact, a firm handshake, a smile and your overall appearance should leave a positive, lasting impression. Work on it. You can easily be rejected or accepted for job consideration based on your first impression. This is demonstrated several times in this handbook. Another example follows.

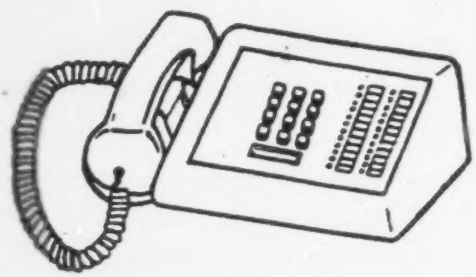
Case History - Who Makes the Hiring Decision Around Here Anyway?

Tina C. was excited about her upcoming interview with a business machines sales and service outfit. She did her homework and found some information about the company in advance, went through a mock interview with the help of friends, jotted down questions she wanted to ask in the interview and bought a new conservative business suit.

Without previous selling experience, she knew a professional sales position would get her career off on the right track. Despite all her preparation, a funny thing happened. She entered the office and cordially introduced herself to the receptionist. She shook the woman's hand and called her by name after meeting her. While waiting for Mr. Stuart (the manager), Tina made polite, positive conversation about the office and the company.

Her interview went well. She followed up by mail and telephone and always called the receptionist by name in a warm, sincere manner. A week later, after interviewing seven more people, Mr. Stuart extended the job offer to Tina. Later she discovered that Jill, the receptionist, let Mr. Stuart know in no uncertain terms that Tina was the right person for the job.

Moral: All things being relatively equal, sometimes secretaries and receptionists have a lot of influence in who gets hired. Treat them as if they are the ones you need to impress.



Case History - Try Something Different

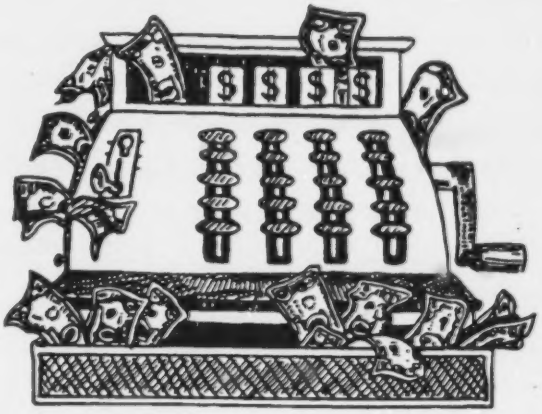
Seeking a career change at age 55, Marilyn B. completed an extensive word processing training course at a local adult school. She had previous experience as a nurse's aide.

Rather than browse through newspaper want ads reflecting less than 20 percent of the local job market at best, she chose a more direct approach. She studied her local phone book's yellow pages and selected three types of businesses she felt needed her new skills. Then she telephoned twenty companies to discuss her qualifications and career objective.

She found 11 companies she contacted said she'd need to come in and fill out an application. These contacts also suggested no position was currently available. Six more said that she should send her résumé. The remaining three indicated she could drop by with a résumé at her convenience. Knowing that people get jobs - not résumés, she acted on these three.

The receptionist at the first company she visited said the owner was not in and that she could leave her résumé. She left it only after she gathered some information about the company and asked when a good time to follow up by telephone would be. The second resulted in a very informal, cordial interview, although no position was available at present. The third resulted in an interview the next day and an immediate job offer which she declined.

This left only one viable prospect out of her first three contacts. As promised, she followed up by telephone and spoke directly to the owner. He had heard from his receptionist she was well dressed and personable - exactly the type needed in this small business. After arranging a personal interview two days later, she was offered and accepted the position.

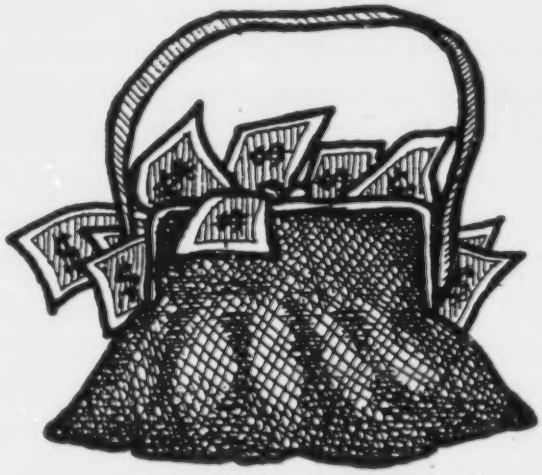


Marilyn B. did several things right. She saved herself a lot of time, money and aggravation by placing her emphasis on three of 20 companies - rather than a shotgun, haphazard, impersonal approach at all 20. She took the initiative of personal and telephone contact rather than relying on sending a piece of paper. She knew her personality and professional appearance would make a good impression.

PART D
Job Search Hints

The authors suggest these hints and tactics in the job search game.

- ✓ Do not spend more than 20 percent of your time in answering job ads. Often employers seek someone wanting to work at dead end jobs or at the entry level. You can apply for jobs you don't think you will get or even one's you are totally disinterested in. By applying, you might uncover other jobs the employer may be interested in filling, had not thought about, and may fill at some future time. The key result of this tactic, however, is additional practice in interviewing. No, it is not a waste of time nor unethical. You are doing the job interviewing for yourself. Try it - it is especially effective for mature workers!



- ✓ When you get an interview invitation, learn as much as possible about that firm BEFORE the interview. Get an annual report, a brochure, find out about the firm by using the library. Use anything to show you know what the company does or produces. Employers like potential employees. that know about the job and can answer questions about the firm. It is alright to go to that place a day or two before the interview to find out or observe how employees dress, behave toward each other and informally get an impression of what it would be like to work there. Certainly tell anyone there about what you are doing, your planned interview, and wanting to find out what they like. A company is like a culture or family. Employers want employees to fit in.

- ✓ Plan your time for job hunting using the want ads, the state employment service, and employment agencies, but use at least 65 percent of your time face-to-face with employers. Statistics suggest this way is more successful than the others mentioned above. Continuously build upon a contact list of people you know, relatives, acquaintances, friends, anyone else that you may want to talk to. Contacts lead you to the unadvertised positions in the hidden job market. Try, at least for a week, using the telephone book and cold calling. If phone fear stops you, write out a little script to and practice before you start your calls. You might be amazed at what you will find after you make your first calls. It may take thirty calls to find five leads, but it is worth it.

✓ ALWAYS send out thank-you notes to anyone you talk to about your job hunting, especially after an interview. It is a courteous way to show you want the job and appreciate the time spent with you. It may sound old fashioned, but that employer/person will think well of you. Many good things can be accomplished by this simple act. You will feel better too. (The prospective employer may know of another job you might be fitted for and remember you because of the thankfulness you showed. It can give you a way to approach that employer at a future time in case you were not hired or that job did not materialize.)

✓ **DON'T GO AT IT ALONE**. Explain to those around you that you are having a hard time in getting what you want in a job. Enlist the aid of anyone that you are close to.

✓ Keep your body and spirit nourished; keep stress at a manageable level by having some fun and exercise. Pay attention to your appearance and remember - **this is a game**! It's a game that will improve your life. Invite no's from employers as that gets you to yes's faster. A no from an employer is not a personal insult. It is just part of the game played when you job search.

✓ VOLUNTEERING is another way to get noticed, improve your skills, be useful, and improve your job chances. Often, by volunteering services for a few hours a week, you might get hired at that place. If not, your **work content skills** will improve, and the possibility of a reference add up to improved visibility. Volunteering is not just for women; men are needed at many places. It's a way to build on that important contact list! Volunteering can give you a lift if you have been fired or if you have been out of the work force for a long time.

✓ If "stuck," find a competent job coach. Look in the Yellow Pages. Use your imagination.

✓ **DON'T GIVE UP!!!**

"A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for."

- John A. Shedd

Doing Your Homework

An obvious but limited use of your résumé is to send it in response to published classified advertisements. If you use this approach look at some of the "other" resources available:

- *The National Business Employment Weekly*
- *America's Job Bank (Internet)*

Phone contact with people will insure you are not just another piece of paper. A good resource is:

- The *Industrial Directory* published by your local Chamber of Commerce

Other publications and periodicals to get information about companies prior to making contact and to really shine during interviews can be gained from:

- Trade Magazines
- Telephone Yellow Pages
- *Guide to American Directories*
- *Encyclopedia of Associations*
- *Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors and Executives*
- *Dun & Bradstreet Million Dollar Directory*
- *Dun & Bradstreet Reference Book of Corporate Managements*
- *Directory of Corporate Affiliations*
- *Standard Directory of Advertisers and Supplements*
- *Thomas Register of American Manufacturers*
- *Polk's World Bank Directory*

These sources and others are readily available from your local library.

Don't forget the smaller and less visible firms in a given area. Many lesser known companies offer more challenging work and better learning environments - and sometimes better compensation! Furthermore, most new jobs are created in companies which employ less than 100 employees.

Consider entering your résumé in a computerized database scanned by many Fortune 500 companies. Don't forget unions and employment agencies. Try to find out:

Industry Background:

- What is the history of this type of industry in its particular geographic area?
- Has the demand for the product / service changed over time? If so, how?
- What major changes / concerns / issues have there been in the past five years?
- What is the outlook in the foreseeable future?
- How is this industry related to others?

Company Background:

- What is the product or service your targeted company offers?
- Who are their clients, customers or buyers?
- How long has the company been in business?
- Has the company grown? How?
- How many people does the company employ?
- How are its internal departments defined?
- How does the company attract and land new people?
- What is company's position in the market?
- Who are the key players in the company?

Where do you get the information?

- Chamber of Commerce Directories / Articles
- Newspapers
- Trade Association Offices
- State Employment Service
- School Placement Offices
- Public Library Business / Reference Section

The Three Paths - How to Play to Win

There are in essence, only three ways to make contact with a prospective employer:

- Internet/e-mail
- mail / fax
- telephone
- person to person

A successful job search normally requires using all three methods.

In direct person to person contact, dress as if going on a job interview. Have your data bank sheet, résumé, master application, Social Security card, driver's license, reference information, letters of recommendation, certificates of training and information on past employers with you. Enter the business and approach the person at the front desk. Ask to see either the manager, or someone to talk to you about the company's job opportunities in your vocational area.

If you can talk to the hiring authority, introduce yourself and offer your hand (shake). Indicate your employment interests and state your qualifications. Express your interest in learning about possible opportunities at the company or tell why you are particularly interested in working there. Depending on the employer's response, you may take one or more of the following actions:

- do an on-the-spot interview
- schedule an interview
- telephone on a specific day within a specified time period
- furnish additional information such as references, letters of recommendation, etc.
- leave a completed application or résumé and call or drop by again at a recommended time

Request a business card and state appreciation for the employer's time and consideration. If you cannot talk to the hiring decision maker, offer your résumé to the person at the front desk and ask that it be given to the right person. Or request an application and complete it there. Or take the application home, fill it out and return it to the company. Request the person's advice on the best time to call or come back. Find out who the hiring authority is. Ask for other ideas helpful to an eager applicant. Request literature on the company. Express your thanks for the person's time and consideration. Document your conversation and make notes regarding specific follow up plans.

Remember:

- Secretaries and receptionists are often consulted in determining who gets interviewed. Always conduct yourself in a friendly and professional manner.

- Employers are considerably more likely to take you seriously if you have something to sell; (hit hot buttons such as longevity, career motivation, personal traits, past accomplishments, etc.)

- You will be more favorably received if it looks like the company was specifically targeted, not that you are going up and down the street - even if you are.

- A little homework will go a long way toward demonstrating your knowledge and understanding of a company's products/services and problems.

If unable to make personal visits to prospective employers or if it is not appropriate in your profession, the telephone is the next best method of making contacts. Find out who the decision makers are and try to reach them on the phone. Tell them briefly about your background and request a personal meeting. Nobody, practically, gets hired based on how he/she looks on paper. Save résumés for face to face meetings if possible to avoid getting screened out before you even get in the door.

Use the mail to follow up on personal meetings or telephone conversations. Try to avoid sending out résumés in an effort to land interviews. 80 percent of jobs go unadvertised and as a result, 90 percent of the job seekers are vying for 20 percent of the jobs.

Call First

Too often, when would-be job applicants may appear in person or telephone, they opt instead to send a résumé. Remember, you will not get hired until you meet face-to-face with a prospective employer. Do not risk getting rejected as a viable job candidate by taking the easy road out - mailing your résumé. Although you may be working and unable to take time to see the employer, a telephone call is only a finger away.

Case History - Getting Past the Secretary

Sure, secretaries are often critical decision makers when it comes to hiring, but what about the situation where they are not? Often it is the secretary's job to not let you get to the person you need. This is what Larry G. did about it.

As an experienced appliance salesperson with strong selling skills, Larry G., at age 53, was looking for a better career opportunity with greater monetary rewards. No stranger to hard work, he set out to break into the insurance and investments field.

He knew he would have to sell himself. After carefully investigating companies in his area, he began making telephone calls in an effort to make contact with the right people. To his dismay, he was rarely successful in getting to decision makers. He got a lot of "I'm sorry, Mr. Allen is in a meeting right now, may I give him a message." His calls were not returned.

It was time for plan B. He called before 8:30 a.m., after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends. Guess who answered the telephone? That's right - decision makers like Mr. Allen. Larry G. had the opportunity to state his case, ask for a personal meeting and eventually, land the job he wanted. Try it - it really worked for Larry G.!

Selling Yourself - Don't Forget to Ask for the Job

All professional sales people are trained to know that no matter how good their product or service is, it is critical that they ask for the order. It's called the close, and the same technique holds true in a job search.

Your prospective employer needs to know that you want the job. If a person is sincere and enthusiastic about wanting something in life, chances are he/she will be more successful in those endeavors. Anybody can do it. The scenario might go like this:

A = applicant for the job
I = interviewer / prospective employer

A: "Mr. Wagner, from everything I've seen and heard here today, I really want to join XYZ Company. When can I start?" (Don't say another word, the next person to open his mouth loses.)
I: "Gee, I really appreciate your interest but I have six more people to interview tomorrow. We'll let you know."

A: Smiling brightly and looking the interviewer right in the eye, "I can save you a lot of time. This is exactly the position I have been looking for and I know my enthusiasm, good work habits and past experience will allow me to make a valuable contribution to XYZ."

I: "We'll see, thanks for coming in."

A: "When will you be making a decision?"

I: "Next Wednesday."

A: "Can I give you a call on Wednesday morning to hear what you've decided?"

The applicant did several things right. He asked for the job in a friendly, non-stressful, almost joking way so that he would not offend or put undue pressure on the interviewer. he took the initiative to follow up and not wait for a phone call which may never come. Next, he made it clear he wanted, and was, the right person for the job.

Selling yourself is simple. We know at least one situation where a sales manager would never extend a sales position offer, if the interviewee did not ask for the job. As important as this technique is, so is interview follow up. The next section contains another interview follow up that landed a job.

Case History - Interview Follow up is Critical

Jane J. had an excellent interview for an office manager position in which she not only asked for the job and found out when a decision was to be made, but also took an interesting and different follow up approach.

That evening after the interview, she planned to follow up her interview by writing a brief letter restating her assets and interests in the position. She wanted to try something a little different to make sure her correspondence was received and remembered. Instead of a normal letter, she decided on a Western Union Mailgram (telegram)!

With the assistance of the clerk at the Western Union office, she wrote:

> *"Thanks again for your time. Just wanted to confirm my interest in joining Acme Electronics and to let you know I want the job. May I call you Monday? Sincerely, Jane J."*

Her message contained nothing special. Her approach did. The next day, as the decision maker went through his in-basket and mail, his curiosity led him to open her telegram first. Her follow up was received and left a lasting impression. She was offered the position when she called two days later to inquire about a decision.

Follow up by mail, Mailgram, fax, telephone and express mail quickly and often. Anything you can do to take the initiative and demonstrate your interest will give you an advantage over your competition. Job search winners don't sit back and wait for things to happen.

Case History - Create Your Own Position

Carol R., 52, had been with one real estate company for 15 years. After her firm hired a new management team, she opted to look at other opportunities. With an M.B.A. degree and considerable volunteer experience in non-profit causes, she hoped to land a position combining these other skills with her real estate knowledge.

After investing in a good résumé and paying a service to customize her letters, she found her response to answering newspaper classified ads less than impressive. After rejection after rejection, she took matters into her own hands.

She discussed the possibility of a position with a land developer with whom she had developed a good business rapport. Although they had never employed a real estate broker before, she sold them on why they needed one and why she was the right choice. After four interviews, they agreed and extended a handsome offer.

The story has a simple moral:

- Don't count on an overwhelming response to newspaper classified advertisements.
- Your odds of success are much greater by using existing resources and contacts.
- Create your own position by selling your skills and previous accomplishments.

Case History - The Informal Approach

Ben F. applied for a private hospital marketing position. After a lengthy and positive personal interview with the marketing director, Ben asked some pointed and well-thought out questions.

As the interview was about to conclude, Ben took the conversation into a more informal direction. By design he had planned this from the beginning. As he went through the interview he was taking mental notes of things asked in the interview and of the office environment in general. He noticed a golf trophy on the marketing director's shelf and inquired about it.

The marketing director was involved in sponsoring a golf tournament for local charities. This was dear to his heart. He talked at length about it. Ben F. could relate to the stories told and talked of his own game and of a golf tournament he once conducted himself. The conversation also drifted toward family members and casual personal information.

Ben F.'s plan was to create a less formal, more personal atmosphere in an effort to really get to know the marketing director. His plan worked. Although he was not selected for the position, he did develop a good relationship with the marketing director, left a lasting impression, effectively followed up twice by telephone and once by mail and was offered a public relations position six months later. He nurtured a lasting relationship by employing the informal interview approach.

Case History - Give Them Something to Remember You By

Judy B. had the opportunity to work in the marketing department of a food processing company. Although she started in a clerical capacity and never advanced much further, she gained considerable experience in all aspects of marketing communications.

When a large conglomerate bought the firm, reorganization resulted in loss of her job. With eight weeks of severance pay she rather suddenly found herself on the street in search of a new position.

Her experience allowed her to land an interview with a similar company. As her interview neared a close, she opened a portfolio with several samples of advertisements, brochures and product flyers that she had been involved in producing for her former employer. She explained that her role had been to edit copy and purchase typesetting, photography and

printing services from local vendors. The interviewee was impressed by the quality of the materials and asked her to leave some behind to attach to her résumé.

When discussing the ten applicants with other management at the company, Judy B. had an edge over her competitors. The others involved in the decision making process could grasp first hand the type of work in which Judy had some knowledge. It worked, Judy B. started immediately.

Although Judy B.'s role in producing these materials was secondary to her primary duties at the company, her exposure to marketing communications helped sell her. She was able to leave samples of work she had been involved in and left something vivid and tangible to be remembered by after she had left. **What can you do to make a lasting impression?**

> Work is love made visible
> Kahlil Gibran

Interviewing - Be Yourself

Employment interviews can be one of our most frightening experiences (possibly even worse than going to the dentist)! Some helpful hints on interviewing follow:

- A little old fashioned courtesy gives the right impression. Thank you, please, etc. Don't smoke unless an ash tray is present and even then we advise against it. Be courteous with all people you encounter within a company. Many decision makers ask others their impressions of an employee prospect.

- Try to be at ease, but never arrogant or assuming. Make eye contact at once and regularly thereafter. The first 10 seconds of an interview will often get you serious consideration or eliminate you. You might feel ill-at-ease (it's only natural and employers' expect this), but don't bring attention by stroking your hair or twiddling your thumbs.

- If you don't know an answer, admit it. Don't invent one. Many times there is no right or wrong response. Answer honestly and precisely. Never lie.

- Act alive and alert. Get enthused. Nothing is more contagious and uplifting than genuine enthusiasm. Don't go overboard and be perceived as phony.

- If you really want the job, you can enhance your chances tremendously by being able to display some knowledge of the company's operations.

- Let the interviewer lead with the questioning. Listen closely and answer what is asked. Don't try to fill in all of the silent moments. Your reaction to an interview question or pause in the interview is sometimes an interview test.

- Pay strict attention so that you understand each question. If you do not understand, ask the interviewer to repeat or even rephrase the question.

- Don't interrupt. Don't rush you answers. You are entitled to think before you answer.

- Don't try to give the answer you think the interviewer wants. Strive for consistency.

- Don't be a comedian. The employer believes this is serious business. Pleasantries and pleasantness are always in order. Beware of both smart talk and small talk.

- Don't spend too much time discussing past employment unless you are absolutely pressed. Never knock your present or past employers. Personality conflict may be all you ever need to say regarding an unpleasant past association.

- Don't overplay your technical knowledge. By now the employer will want to know you as a person.

- During the initial interview, don't spend much time asking about advancement or compensation packages. Give the impression that given the opportunity to prove yourself, the future will take care of itself. Most employers are not in the habit of hiring someone they expect to stand still and do only what is required.

- If it becomes obvious that you are not the right person for the job at the end of an interview, admit it and ask the interviewer if there might be another position within his/her company for which you may be qualified. If his company is small, ask him/her if he/she might suggest another company who might benefit from your services.

- Be on time.

- A little exercise (such as deep knee bends) in a private place before the interview will help reduce the unneeded adrenalin rush which results in added nervousness.

- Bring an extra copy of your résumé, your data bank work sheet and model application, complete addresses and phone numbers of references, and a list of questions you may want answered to the interview. If you can, samples of your work, related work, or a portfolio of some sort will aid your cause tremendously.

- Firm handshake without pain.

- If you want the job - **ASK for it.**

- If you don't get the offer on the spot. Find out when a decision will be made and ask permission to call back then.

- Evaluate the interview objectively and list the things you did right and the things on which you could improve.

- Mention the name of the company that you are applying with often in the interview.

- Be neat and well groomed. In most cases, dress like you're ready to go to work. If uncertain about how to dress, be conservative. Wear a traditional suit and tie or just shirt and tie as appropriate. For women, a neutral colored dress or skirt and blouse are usually best.

- Answer questions in a way that puts their interests above your own. It's not me, me, me. It's what you can do to help them. Demonstrate personality traits that they want to see such as enthusiasm, persistence, sincerity, ability to get things done, and personal things you have accomplished that could help them be successful.

- The interviewer may try to talk you out of the job in an effort to test your persistence. Show confidence, single-mindedness and persistence; not fears and doubts.

- **BE YOURSELF.**

Body Language - What Does Your Body Say When You're Not Looking?

Now that your résumé is ready to make a good first impression, are you? A myriad of articles and books on body language address the art of making the right physical moves to show confidence, self-esteem, intelligence and enthusiasm. First the obvious:

- Grooming is important. It has been demonstrated through studies that people - even teenagers - are attracted more readily to people who are neat, well-dressed and clean.

- Traditional, more conservative dress is always appropriate for job interviewing. There is no place for humor, dressing too casually or wearing faddish clothing.

- Eye-to-eye contact, a firm handshake and frequent smiling are almost always appropriate.

More subtle, less natural body language movements are natural for some and must be practiced by others:

- Lean forward in your chair regularly. It shows awareness and interest and indicates you genuinely like the person with whom you are talking. Leaning backward is perceived (often unconsciously), as avoidance, dislike or inattention.

- **Smile correctly**. The proper smile is with the lips parted, corners of the mouth up

with the top teeth showing. Smiles which are made with lips together, or the reverse, smiles that are made with open mouth are recognized as "canned" and not an indication of one's real interest or friendship.

- Eyebrow movement. Studies in many cultures indicate eyebrows flashed upward and held about a half second shows interest approval and friendliness.

Practice these techniques and make a gigantic step toward body movements that emit the right signals. Make it part of your everyday life and you could achieve better results in all endeavors that demand personal interaction.

> *"Imagination rules the world."*
>
> Napoleon Bonaparte

What Should You be Prepared to Answer in the Interview?

How you say it is usually more important than what you say. However, for those who want to be completely prepared, a list of the 50 most often asked interview questions follows:

1. *Why did you select my organization to interview with?*
2. *Why did you select (school) or (major)?*
3. *What type of extra-curricular activities did you participate in? Why?*
4. *What courses did you like best? Least?*
5. *What other jobs or companies are you considering?*
6. *Tell me about a time you made a split second decision that turned out for the best?*
7. *Describe yourself.*
8. *What do you know about our company?*
9. *What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?*
10. *How do you feel you can make a contribution to our company?*
11. *What accomplishment has given you the most satisfaction?*
12. *Describe your most rewarding experience.*
13. *Are you willing to travel? Relocate?*
14. *What major problems have you encountered and how have you dealt with them?*
15. *Why are you leaving your present position?*

16. *How far do you think you can go with us?*
17. *What are you looking for in a job?*
18. *What is your career objective?*
19. *Why should we hire you?*
20. *Do you like to work? Why?*
21. *What kind of salary are you worth?*
22. *Can you work under pressure?*
23. *What kind of people do you like? Dislike?*
24. *Why didn't you do better in school?*
25. *Why have you changed jobs so frequently?*
26. *What is your biggest strength? Your biggest weakness?*
27. *What makes you angry?*
28. *How long will it take for you to make a contribution to our company?*
29. *How long would you stay with our company?*
30. *What do you think you will be doing five years from now?*
31. *What did you think of your previous boss?*
32. *Why haven't you obtained a new job so far?*
33. *What was the last book you read? Last movie you saw?*
34. *What interests you most about this position? Company?*
35. *What interests you least about this position?*
36. *Why haven't you earned more money?*
37. *Are you out to take your boss's job?*
38. *Give me an example of your creativity. Your analytical abilities.*
39. *What makes you think you are qualified for this position?*
40. *What can you do for us that the next person can't?*
41. *What are your three greatest accomplishments?*
42. *What accomplishments are still to come?*
43. *Tell me about an incident when your work was criticized.*
44. *What important trends do you see evolving in our industry?*
45. *What are the elements of a successful organization as you see it?*
46. *Could you handle your boss's job tomorrow?*
47. *What do you do in your spare time?*
48. *Can you delegate responsibility? Give an example.*
49. *Have you ever hired anyone before? What do you look for?*
50. *Have you ever fired anyone before? Why?*

REMEMBER:

- More than 70 percent of interviewing success is of a subjective nature. Through questioning, the interviewer is also looking for: personality traits, qualities, abilities, maturity, self-image, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, leadership abilities, and how you would fit in as a member of the team.

- Be Yourself ... Firm Handshake ... Eye-to-eye Contact ... Smile ... Use the name of the company you are interviewing with, and the interviewer's name often in your interview.

> *"The best way is always through."*
>
> Robert Frost

What <u>You</u> Should Ask in the Interview?

You should be prepared to ask questions at every interview. If all your questions are well thought out and written in advance, you will often be able to steer the conversation in the direction you want it to go - toward your strengths! At the very least, use your questions at the end of the interview. It is best, however that you ask some as you go along. Gear your questions along the following lines:

- Questions which pinpoint growth opportunities within the company are smart questions which may also help you determine if the move is right for you.

- Questions that show you are "career" oriented and willing to do whatever it takes to be successful in your new position.

Samples include:

1. I heard that <u>competitor</u> is now marketing _____. Do <u>we</u> have any plans to go in this direction in the future?
2. How are <u>our or company name</u> products or services presently marketed?
3. What are <u>our</u> future marketing plans? Or: What new (products or services) are planned in the future?
4. Can you describe a typical day at my job?
5. When was my predecessor promoted?
6. What personal characteristics are necessary to do this job well?
7. What are some of the objectives that you would like accomplished in this job?
8. What is most pressing? What needs to be done within the next two to three months? What are some of the longer term objectives?
9. How much freedom would I have in determining my work objectives, priorities,

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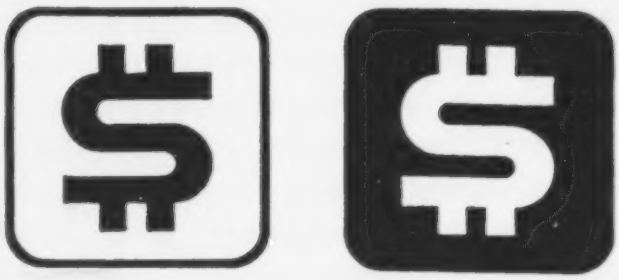
dead-lines, and methods of measurement?

10. What kind of support does this position receive in terms of people, finances, or other resources?
11. What are some of the more difficult challenges that one faces in this position? How do you think these could be best handled?
12. Where do you think a person who is successful in this position could go, and in what time frame?
13. How is one judged? What accounts for success?
14. Should I further my (training or education) to help me in my career?
15. What professional publications should I read?
16. Why is this position open? Why did the person who held this position most recently leave?
17. How often has it been filled in the past five to ten years?
18. What have been the primary reasons for people leaving this position?
19. What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this position?

Show commitment in your interview answers, "Based on performance, what advancement opportunities will be available?"



The Salary Question

This is one of the most often asked questions about the interview and résumé process. Like most of the job search game, there is no definitive answer, only gray areas. These guidelines are suggested:

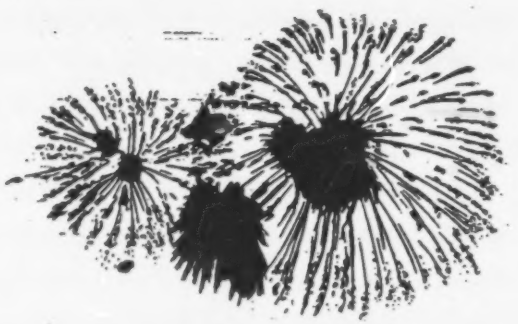
- Try to avoid discussing compensation and benefits packages in the initial stages.
- **Exception** - When you would move based only on these factors. To save both your time as well as that of the prospective employer, be up front. State that compensation

is not the most important issue, but that you must have an idea/range in advance to even consider making a move.

- When asked to state salary **requirements** in response to a published advertisement, always give a broad range. As a P.S. at the bottom of your cover letter, state something like, "My salary requirements range from $2,200 to $3,200 per month depending on benefits." The same can be said verbally in an interview. Select a range that includes your bottom line as well as a figure more in keeping with your values and expectations.

  Exception - It is often a good idea to express your salary requirements as limitless. This shows you will not be satisfied to simply do your job. Instead it indicates you have the energy and ambition to help the organization grow, and as it grows, have some incentive, commission, bonus, or other method of compensation in keeping with your contributions. While this is especially true in sales or management, you can give the same impression regardless of the type of work you will be doing.

- When asked to state salary **history** in response to a published advertisement, you should always tell the truth. "My recent salary history ranges from $1,800 to $2,500 per month might be a typical response. You may need to include a remark such as, "This was not a career opportunity and as such is not indicative of my true value."



Miscellaneous Job Search Tips

- The job search game is both an art and a science. While there are certain recommended do's and don'ts, different approaches work for different people. Do not try to master or even use every strategy proposed in this handbook. Use those that feel right for you.

  Some occupations such as those with cruise lines or airlines (some enlightened enough to seek mature workers!), still require a photograph. With the pressure faced by large

corporations to meet equal opportunity and minority hiring guidelines, a photograph may be advantageous. Use it if you feel it will help. Anything you do that is a little bit different can help you stand out from others.

- There are ways to eliminate the negative and accentuate the positive in your résumé or résumé alternative. If education is not your strong point, completion of one college level course lets you state that you are "studying business" or an "engineering major."

- The same can be said of experience. Often this term is used in classified ads because the writer doesn't know what else to say. A good book, motivational tape or one-day workshop focused toward your specific career direction allows you to "talk business."

- If you have a friend who is well known and respected in the community, get a letter introducing you to the firm with which you seek an interview. If you need confidentiality, do not have your name used in the letter.

- When it comes to confidentiality, you can even respond to newspaper ads without stating your name although this is not a preferred strategy.

- Look at the business news section of your daily newspaper. When it tells of people joining new companies, there is often an opening in the company the person just left.

- Employers expect more than just a nine to five employee. When interviewing, make it clear you are not just an eight-hour employee but willing to do whatever it takes to do the job. Workaholic characteristics usually score big with prospective employers.

- After you have interviewed for a position and have evaluated the company and job, ask yourself the following questions:

  - Does this look like the right company and position for me?
  - Did I present a good image of myself and my capabilities?
  - How could I have better presented my skills, qualifications or personality?

- Contact the interviewer by telephone as often as possible without being too pushy. First, follow up in writing.

  Guidelines are listed below:

  - Like your cover letter, address the person by his full name and title. Do not use first names in your greeting even if they were used in the interview.
  - Do not use abbreviations.

- Each follow up letter must be individually typed and signed.
- Simply sum up the dates, people and places you met and saw during your visit.
- Use good quality paper; preferably the same as your résumé.
- Make sure it looks neat and professional.
- Proofread for spelling and punctuation errors.
- Send a good follow up letter within 24 hours after the interview. Then make telephone contact every three to seven days (depending on the situation).

- When it comes to describing your accomplishments, either on paper or in an interview situation, take a problem-solution-result approach. It works like this:

  Problem: "We had a major presentation and had only three days to prepare."

  Solution: "I worked straight through for 20 hours writing the presentation and supervising my team."

  Result: "We landed the account and a follow-up project for another $250,000."

- Employers hire people they think will fit in and get the job done.

- Employers seek honesty, common sense, career commitment, loyalty, dependability and competence.

- If unsure what you want - pretend you know - and target your approach accordingly.

- Situations Wanted - Ever think about advertising yourself in newspapers or trade journals? It's inexpensive and novel, especially if you are in great demand or very technically skilled.

> *"My interest is in the future because I am going to spend the rest of my life there."*
>
> - Charles A. Kettering

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JOB KEEPING TIPS FOR MATURE WORKERS

- Have a copy of your job description with you in your own personal file at work. Keep a copy at home to refer to in private. Know what is expected of you at all times.

- Find and read the organization's mission statement, annual report or other documentation to gain a sense of the company's mission and philosophy. You might find items in that statement which apply to your job. Additionally, you may be able to volunteer for other tasks that need to get done.

- Have your personal transportation needs solved and arrangements made for the care of loved ones or anything else that might make you late or absent from work.

- Most importantly, do not spread rumors or pass along negatives about anyone. Learn to listen and sense who is in favor and who is not. Be aware and join in with others. Offer to help with work where it will be appreciated.

- Keep a personal log of what you are accomplishing on a weekly basis. A diary or log will help you focus on how you are doing, what you need to change and add to as you learn your job. This will help you when evaluated by a superior.

- Office politics always exist in organizations. Keep your eyes and ears open at all times. Fit in, but do not join cliques.

- Keep learning.

Jobs Leads List

1. Name of Company _____
2. Address _____
3. Phone Number _____
4. Name of Contact Person _____
5. Date "Thank you" note sent _____
6. Date for re-contact and results _____

" " " " " " "

1. Name of Company _____
2. Address _____
3. Phone Number _____
4. Name of Contact Person _____
5. Date "Thank you" note sent _____
6. Date for re-contact and results _____

" " " " " " "

1. Name of Company _____
2. Address _____
3. Phone Number _____
4. Name of Contact Person _____
5. Date "Thank you" note sent _____
6. Date for re-contact and results _____

Make copies of this form for your job search campaign.

You and the "Computer

Before I start this discussion of technology and computers, you should know that I am writing this on a cheap yellow legal pad, while relaxing in the high mountain meadow in the midst of the Okanogan National Forest in northeastern Washington State. Except for the computers that are built into the engine of my pickup truck, the closest computer to me now is probably in the small town about 40 miles from here! You see, technology is vital in our lives, but it isn't all consuming. There needs to be time for fishing and grouse hunting too!

With that in mind, let's talk a bit about...

Why you must become part of the technology age today.

For many of us, the word "computer" can bring feelings of fear, confusion, ignorance, or at least uncertainty. That is probably true for you if you don't yet know how to comfortably use a computer. It is normal to have those feelings about the unknown.

Let's look for a minute at other devices of our technology age. Do you fear your television? Are you confused about your telephone? Of course not, because you have learned to use them. Now, if you are like me, you are uncertain about your VCR, probably because it still flashing 12:00 and has been since the day you bought it! You see, we haven't learned to be comfortable with the features of that device, so it still intimidates us a little.

So, it's normal to have those feelings. But it is clear that, in the case of your computer, it is important we dispel them, and become as at ease with a computer as we are with our TV. (In fact, you will soon find that your TV will incorporate much of what your computer can do!) When television was still quite new, in the late '40s and 50's some people did not have them. In fact, some people clung to the radios rather than embrace TV. But the world marched ahead, providing news, entertainment, education, and more, primarily through television. The same is happening today, in the late 90's and beyond with the personal computer. Old forms of media will not to go away because of computers, any more than the radio did. However, the computer will be part of everyday life -- just like the TV became 50 years ago.

While every business in our society is not yet computerized, most are in some way, and nearly all the others will use a computer in some part of their business. So naturally, a typical employer would like to have employees who are computer savvy. If you are still in the labor force, being able to say on a resume that you have at least basic computer skills may very well help you get past the first cut in applicant screening. (Keep in mind that the younger generation of job seekers has likely been trained and grew up with computers.)

If you are going to participate in the future, and you <u>are</u>, the personal computer will be important to you. Now, does that mean you must rush right out and buy a computer today? Perhaps not. Does it mean you should find access to one, and use it? Certainly!

Computers are dumb!

That's important for you to remember. But they do follow your instructions precisely. Also important to remember:

How do you give your computer instructions?

- ✓ By loading a program into it. A program is simply a list of instructions (usually a very long and complex list). Most, if not all, programs you will use will have been written by someone else, a programmer, to perform specific tasks for you. An operating system, in such as Windows 98, is a program, designed to control the functions and devices in your computer, and can act as a go-between, between you, the hardware, and the other programs you use.
- ✓ By keyboarding entry. Many instructions and most of the data you give to your computer are done with the keyboard.
- ✓ With the mouse. Most modern computers use a mouse, with which you can give commands in a graphical environment -- that is, using pictures, symbols, and menus (list of commands).

In those frustration moments when you want to shoot your computer, keep in mind it is only doing exactly what you instructed it to do!

What do you need to learn?

For the most part, we use personal computers (PCs) to perform tasks we've done before. However, with a PC, those tasks are easier and results are usually better. To be proficient at taking advantage of the PC's benefits, there are a few programs/tasks that I recommend you learn.

Mousing

There are two physical skills, which are required to be a savvy computer user called writing and "mousing". Remember, the keyboard and the mouse are two primary means of giving your computer instructions. Typing is obvious, and many of you probably are already accomplished typists. The rest of you should gain or improve that skill as soon as possible.

Mousing is simple, but requires some practices to basic tips. The mouse is a simple device that holds a small rubber ball while you roll it around on the table. When you roll it left, the cursor in the screen moves left. When you roll it right, the cursor moves right, and so on. There is at least one button on the mouse, which you use to "click" or to "drag". (If the mouse has more than one button, the left button is the one you will use for these basic functions.)

"Click"

By pressing down the releasing the mouse button, you have performed a "click". This is the way you select an object on your screen.

"Drag"

To drag, you press the button down while rolling the mouse. Then you release the button to complete the drag. This technique is commonly used to move an object on the screen, or to select several objects, or a group of text.

Most important tip:

Don't press down on the mouse. Only roll it. When you press the button, do so simply with gentle pressure, not a violent stab. (You see, you don't want the mouse to move when you click.)

Second most important tip:

Rest your forearm on the table and move the mouse with finger and wrist action. Holding your arm up and moving your whole arm will tire you very quickly.

Practice a lot with your mousing until can use it without conscious thought. It should become an extension of your hand. Ask an experienced friend or someone at the computer store for help if this remains uncomfortable for you.

Word Processing

What we used to do with a typewriter is now done on a PC with a word processing program. But now we can ask the program to help find our mistakes in spelling and grammar; and we can easily correct those mistakes; we can format and add illustrations to it. To sum it up, word processors let us easily change and enhance what we are typing.

Internet

Yes, our era's most popular buzzword: "Internet". And it is rightfully so. You should become familiar with the Internet so you can use it to your advantage. "So", you ask, "what is it? And what good is it to me? I hear a lot about all the trashy smut and worthless garbage on the Internet. Why do I want to be part of it?"

Good question. There are a lot of trashy books and magazines in our world today. Does that mean we should never read another book?

Publishing is a good example to use here, because that's what the Internet is... the every-man's publishing house. We all have the ability now to easily and inexpensively publish what we want to, on the Internet, and millions of people can read it for little or no cost. With millions of people publishing information on the net about what's important to them, the answer to any research question you have is likely to be there. And it's available at your desk, and relatively easy to find. No need to travel abroad to research a topic. No need to even go to your local library.

Gee! That seems to take the fun out of it. Perhaps, but now information is equally available to everyone. And in the information age, we must know how to access it. So travel abroad and go to the library for fun. Do your research at your desk.

The Internet also provides us news and commentary. You can read many of the world's publications. Need to know the weather forecast for some obscure town? It can be on your desk in seconds, complete with satellite photos and historical models, if you wish.

Statistics that are important to us can be found on the 'Net. Stock market quotes, financial research, classified ads -- yes, even job announcements! And if you are charged with the responsibility to hire staff; search through talent banks of qualified job seekers' resumes, all on the 'Net.

Information, entertainment, education, a market place -- it's all on your desk when you know how to use the Internet.

E-mail (electronic mail)

This one is easy! Surely, you've left the note for a friend or family member. Or you've sent a letter to the relative or colleague. And you've done it on paper and may have used the services of the post office to deliver it.

E-mail is the same concept. But you do it with a computer, and it's instantaneous. Delivery is possible anywhere in the world within a few seconds. And with your message, you may enclose pictures, sounds, videos, or other documents. Furthermore, beyond your normal monthly Internet connection fee, there is no postage!

Other programs

Many and varied are the programs you can use with your computer to enhance your abilities and enjoyment. Just a few are:

Databases - collections of similar bits of information, like an address book, or a recipe file, to name some very basic examples. It's a way of cataloging and easily retrieving information.

Spreadsheets -a convenient way to organize and analyze numbers or statistics. A budget, or financial proposal are simple examples of spreadsheets.

Graphics programs- from simple children's coloring tools to complex 3-dimensional technical drawings to powerful graphic arts tools, computers can be very helpful in the creation of designs.

Research tools -Encyclopedias are now published on computer CDs, and include not only text and pictures but also videos and sounds. On a single CD, you can locate and print detailed maps of any site in the world. Use your computer to research and create

genealogical data and family trees. These are just a few of the many research tools you may use on your PC.

Now that we have a list of computer tools that will help us, where do we go to learn these things?

For those of you who like to do things on your own, there are many very good computer tutorials, in book form, on video tape, on CD, even pre-installed on your computer. Each of them has its' own strengths. Check out a few from your library to see which one's best fit your learning style.

And for the rest of us who prefer a little handholding along the way, check into some of these resources in your community:

- Community college or public school adult education classes.
- Libraries.
- Community education programs in Parks and Recreation Departments or Senior Centers, etc.
- Computer dealers- many independent computer retailers offer very good training. Sometimes it is included with the purchase of a new computer.
- Computer trainers- a growing industry, there are businesses whose sole product is training for computer users

A few things to keep in mind about your training...

- If you own, or plan to soon purchase a computer, be sure the training is compatible with your computer (or vice versa). The operating systems (Windows 98/2000/NT, or Macintosh are the only ones I would bother with today), and the programs you use or will use should be the same, or at least very similar as those discussed in your training material.
- Start at a basic level -- even if you have some self-acquired skills. You'll be amazed at how many tips you'll pick up. ("If only I had known that before!)
- In group training, you will get the most out of it if each student has a computer to use during class. Lecture-style classes may be helpful in some advanced courses, but are merely useless for the beginner.
- Practice, practice, practice. Before you even begin training, make arrangements for a computer to use outside of class. And use it often to reinforce skills learned class.

You'll never regret having participated in some sort of computer training. And it's a great place to meet new friends who share your interest in becoming computer savvy. Perhaps you'll pick up a few e-mail pen pals!

I began this chapter with a disclaimer. Computer technology is not an end in itself. It is merely a tool - or a set of tools - which help us with our tasks of the day. A carpenter will not succeed without skills of using hammer and saw, no surgeon without a scalpel. Those tools are necessary in those occupations. Computer knowledge is a necessary skill in all occupations, and, unlike those occupations-specific tools, a computer can serve you well in the personal side of your life. (You should know that I did check weather, write my packing list, and research the purchase of a new shotgun with the help of my computer before coming up here to the mountains!)

Cyber Job-hunting

Using electronic tools in your quest for a new job is fast becoming the norm. Your computer (or that of a friend or library) affords you tools to create a professional resume, research companies, jobs, and careers, and communicate with potential employers.

Let's look at the Internet as a career tool:

Company research - Use your favorite search engine (I like www.google.com & www.yahoo.com) to find a web site of your potential employer. Once on their site, explore who they are, their financial information (if a public company), what do they do, and what their hiring practices are. Many firms advertise their job openings on their web sites, too.

Post your resume - It is easy to put your resume online. And, in most cases, it's free! Don't miss the opportunity to put it in America's Job Bank (http://www.ajb.org). This is the world's largest collection of talent. So, many personnel managers visit it at least once when looking for that special hire.

There are many resume/job banks on the 'net. Some of my favorites are shown below. Very possibly, there are some specializing in your chosen career. Check with your professional organization or union to find out.

Be sure to pay attention to the resume formatting requirements at each site. Most use one of two formats: plain text (ASCII), or they will collect your information on a form.

Plain text is easy to do. It is basically your normal resume without the formatting enhancements such as font size and style, paragraph indents, tabs, etc. All word processors can read plain text, so your prospective employer can use his/her word processor to read your resume, regardless of which one you used to create it

To create a plain text resume, you may want to start by opening your formatted one. Then simply use the 'Save As' command from the File menu. Select *text* from the*file type* choices. Be sure to name the file something different from your formatted one, so you can preserve both.

Once you have saved it in text format, open it in plain text and check its appearance. You might need to make some minor modifications to make it more readable. Remember, you can only use spaces and line breaks. (The enter/return key.)

IMPORTANT: Just make it readable. Don't spend a lot of time trying to make it "pretty". An employer who prefers electronic resumes often does so because she/he is more interested in the context of your resume than in how talented a

typographer you are. And some employers use automated screening tools to read these.

When you e-mail your resume as an attachment, you should send it in plain text unless directed otherwise.

Search for jobs - While you are posting your resume, check out the job announcements. Most of the same web sites that display your résumé also advertise job openings for their business customers.(Some have sister sites for this purpose.) You'll also find newspaper classified ads online. Locate the newspaper web sites for the community you prefer and navigate to their classified ads.

Career guidance - The Internet is rife with career resources. There are sites that will guide you through a series of questions to help you identify your interests and aptitudes. You can find advice for everything from writing a resume to negotiating a compensation package after you're hired. And you can participate in online discussions with fellow job hunters or professional counselors.

Where to start

Starting out on your Cyber Job-hunt is easier than you might think. The employment security departments of many states have very good web sites to help you. Try yours. Links to all the state sites are here: **http://www.usworkforce.org/onestop/onestopmap.html** .

Most portals have sections devoted to jobs and careers. Here are a few:

- **http://www.excite.com/careers/**
- **http://careers.yahoo.com/**
- **http://www.webcrawler.com/careers**

And there is a list of recommended sites below, albeit incomplete and biased. Using the Internet in your job search can be very helpful and fun!

GOOD JOB HUNTING!

Starting points

- **http://www.aarp.org/working_options/** -- Targeted at the older worker – Excellent.
- **http://www.seniors.gov/work.html** -- Federal site for seniors interested in work.
- **http://www.seniorjobbank.org/** -- Non-profit site with many good links.
- **http://www.rileyguide.com/jobsrch.html** -- How to use the Internet in your Job Search.
- **http://online.onetcenter.org/** -- Useful to help identify occupations for which you are qualified, and information about them.

- **http://www2.jobtrak.com/help_manuals/jobmanual/** -- In-depth discussion of the job search process.
- **http://www.jobhuntersbible.com/** -- from the author of What Color Is Your Parachute?
- **http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocecs/CRC/manual-home.html** -- A career development manual.
- **http://www.bestjobsusa.com**
- **http://www.monster.com**

DOITNOW!

JOB SEARCH RESOURCES

BOOKS:

THE THREE BOXES OF LIFE & HOW TO GET OUT OF THEM.

A winning book from pioneer, life work planning expert, Richard N. Bolles. Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, CA. Look for a revised edition if there is one. The three boxes are what Bolles' refers to as: education, work, and leisure. Mid-life and mature job seekers will like it a lot.

THE COMPLETE JOB-SEARCH HANDBOOK

By Howard Figler, Ph.D. Latest edition from Henry Holt, 1999
Where else could anyone find a "no search job search" and the ZEN of the job search in one volume. Great resource.

JOB HUNTING ON THE INTERNET

Also by Richard Bolles, latest edition, 1999, Ten Speed Press
Look for fairy godmother advice from this slim volume.

CAREERXROADS

By Gerry Crispin & Mark Mehler,
Published by the MMC Group, **Superb** directory of resume, job search, and career management sites.

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